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#69 NOV 1998

PC GAMES NIRVANA

180 PAGES!
**BIGGEST
ISSUE
EVER!**

WORLD FIRST REVIEW!

The game they want to ban is back... but is it still leader of the pack?

CARMAGEDDON II

EXCLUSIVE PLAYTEST

BLOOD II

So gory you'll want to chuck!

OVER 35 GAMES REVIEWED

GP LEGENDS

NEED FOR SPEED III

V2000

TIGER WOODS 99

RAINBOW SIX

MAMMOTH PREVIEW!

X-COM ALLIANCE

Our tip for the best game of '99 -
exclusive interview and pics

HOW TO...

Build your own website
Get through *MechCommander*
Finish *Commandos* in one piece

C&C U-LIKE

We round up all
the best real-time
strategy games

**WHAT'S ON THE
COVER
DISC?**

FULL DETAILS PAGE 104

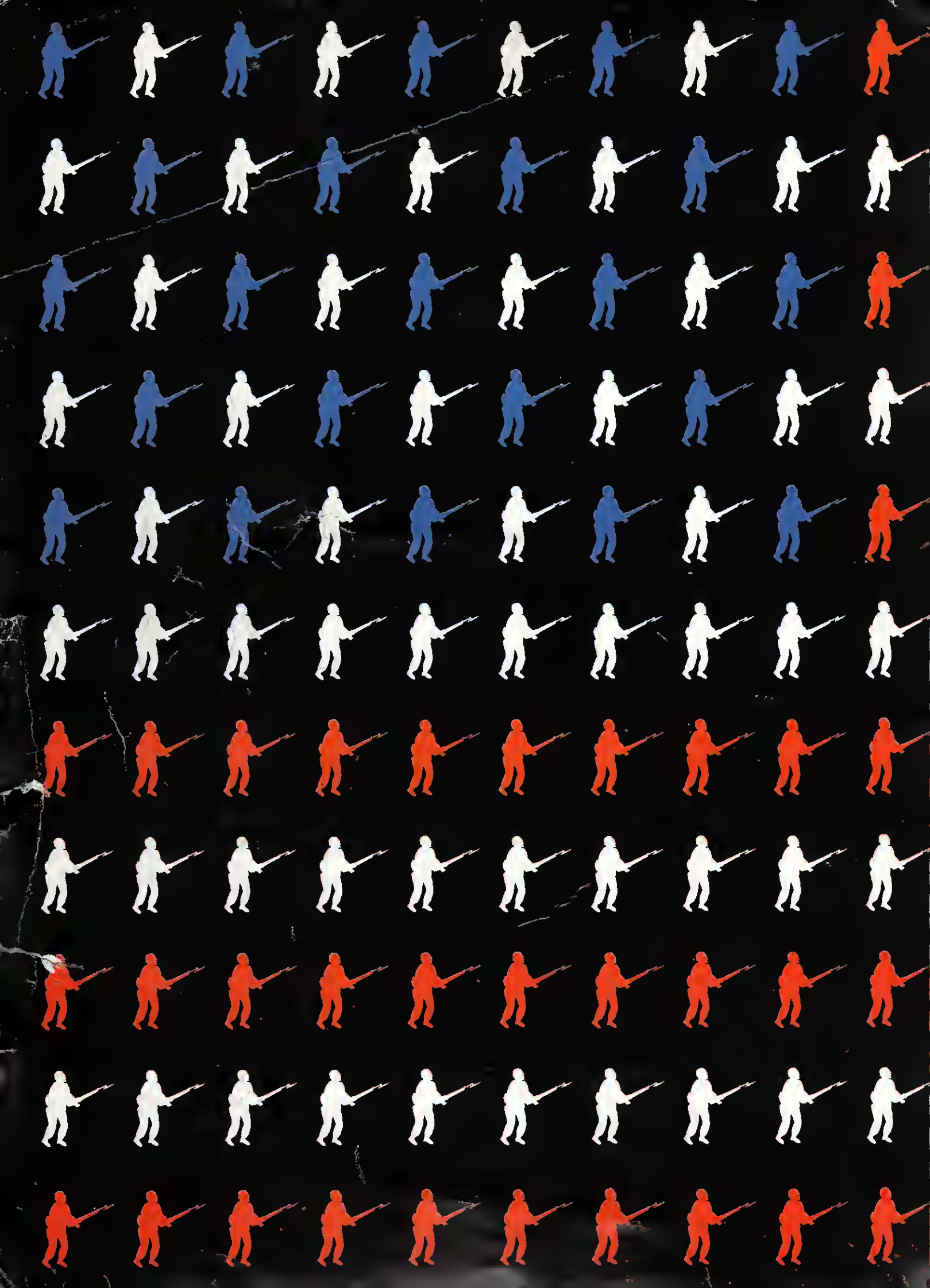
0 TINY COMPO: What's the name of the Guy on our cover?
First out of the hat wins a mystery prize - full details on page 7

£4.99 NOVEMBER 1998 PCZ#69



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**PLUS! KANAAN • ACTUA SOCCER 3 • HERETIC II • SETTLERS III • MYTH II • INTERSTATE '82
MECHWARRIOR 3 • STAR SEIGE • HEAVY GEAR II • STAR TREK: BIRTH OF A FEDERATION**





M.I.A.

MISSING IN ACTION



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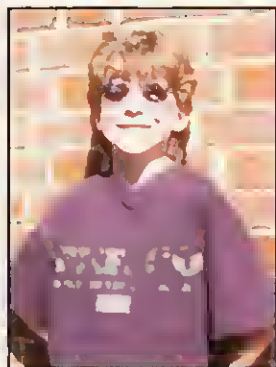
WHAT'S ON YOUR HARD DRIVE?

Just which are the games that everyone is playing this month? **PC ZONE** takes to the streets clutching a clipboard to find out

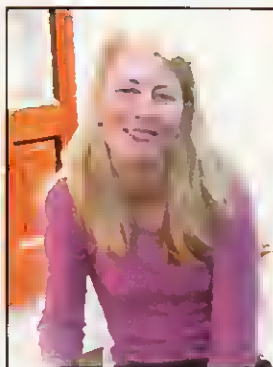
★ WORDS/PHOTOS Philip Fisch CAMERA Casio QV5000SX



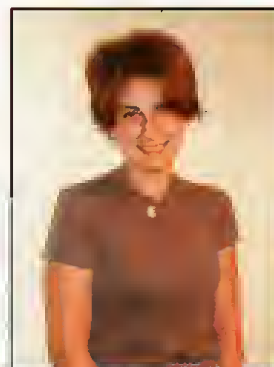
DAN STAGG
27, aircraft engineer
What's on your hard drive?
"Microsoft Flight Sim '98, Air Dominance Fighter, Duke Nukem." **Into flying, by any chance?**
"Well, I suppose I'd have to like flying to do what I do. I've relaxed after work with the last three *Flight Sims*. The '98 version has excellent sound and a better-quality cockpit, making it even more realistic. It's a pity that they don't have trees when you're a few hundred feet above the ground – just to give it that last touch of realism."



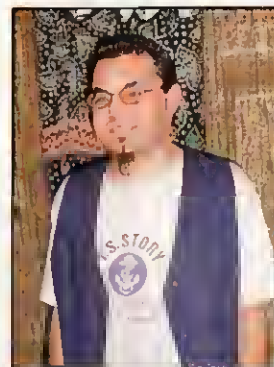
THOMAS STAGG
6, all-round sensible tot!
What's on your dad's hard drive for you?
"Worms 2, Muppets Treasure Island, Microsoft Flight Sim '98." **Hmm, Flight Sim '98 is a family thing, but Worms 2?**
"Worms 2 is my favourite. I beat daddy at it last week by using the old woman, and managed to blow up one of daddy's worms by throwing a sheep at it." **Why is it your favourite?**
"There are lots of really funny bits, like when the worms say 'Stoopid!' in their cool voices."



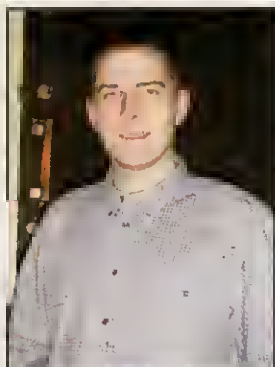
TRACEY SUMMERFIELD
28, air cabin crew
What's on your hard drive?
"Nothing at all!" **Eh?**
"I haven't got a PC, but I do have a Gameboy so that I can play games when I'm doing overnights and I'm all alone in my hotel room." **What's your favourite game?**
"I love my Tamagotchi! The Gameboy version means that I can save and play more than one. I just love my babies. I think they're a substitute for the real thing – minus the stretch marks!"



VANESSA D'ESPERANCE
28, training manager
What's on your hard drive?
"Gubble, Bubble Bobble, Pacman, Tomb Raider II." **What is Gubble?**
"It's about little aliens who have to unscrew screws using their cordless screwdrivers. They have to watch out for the little cogs that come along and knock them off." **Is this a drugs-related game?**
"No, it was just a game which I found on a cover disk – it could even have been one of *PC ZONE's* – and it's the best game ever."



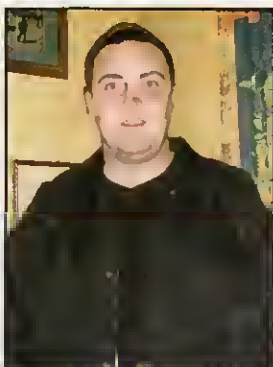
BARISH UZUNAHMET
28, overseas English student
What's on your hard drive?
"I have no games." **What do you do with your PC?**
"I use it mainly for the Internet and my studies, which means that I write a lot. But my English it is not very good, so it is most useful for me to get news from Cyprus – it helps me to keep up to date with things going on at home. As I am not speaking very good English, it also helps me to pass the time with some games."



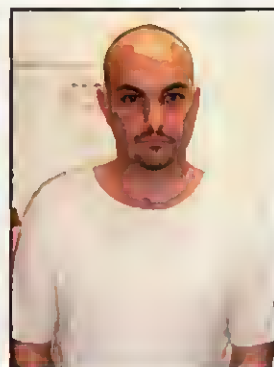
WILL TREVENA
23, software engineer
What's on your hard drive?
"Jezzball, Boxworld." **Eh? Never heard of them.**
"I got Jezzball as an email attachment. It's a great example of a Commodore 64 game. You start off with a bouncing ball in a box. You have to make it draw rectangles within the box until you've taken up 75 per cent of the box. However, if the ball touches one of the lines that you are using to make your rectangle before you finish it, you die! Simple but absolutely brilliant – just like me!"



PAUL PIEROTTI
24, management consultant
What's on yer hard drive, mon?
"Space Invaders, Leaderboard." **Doesn't anyone buy games?**
"I'm having a bit of a nostalgia trip at the moment. There are a load of great old games floating around the Internet at the moment with the current trend for retro gaming, so why spend any money when you use the Internet regularly? By the way, have you noticed that someone at Reuters news is a Rangers fan? They've been having a go at Celtic for ages now."



LAWIE MORTON
26, sales manager
What's on your hard drive?
"Catsplat, Piegate." **Don't tell me – off the Internet?**
"Yes, but that's no reason to dismiss them. There are some great games which most people don't seem to know are even there! I use the Internet a lot, so I tend to pick up a lot." **What's Catsplat?**
"Pure relaxation. Use the mouse to target, and the button to shoot pussies catapulted onto the screen amid some great sound effects. Not one for cat lovers."



BEN MCLUAGHLIN
30, audio engineer
What's on your hard drive?
"MDK, Alien Trilogy, Doom." **A sensitive soul, then?**
"Eh? No, I abhor violence in real terms, but love a bit of gratuitous hacking, slashing and shooting from time to time. A lot of people can't see the therapeutic side of unbridled fantasy violence. I was introduced to it as a form of psychiatric reconditioning whereby I was able to vent my anger via a fantasy world, thereby helping to dilute any psychotic threat to myself or society."



RUPERT
30, music shop owner
What's on your hard drive?
"Blade Runner, Carmageddon, X-Wing." **Nothing musical, then?**
"I do have a lot of .WAV and MIDI files – a bit of Tchaikovsky playing in the background is the perfect partner to *Carmageddon*, my favourite game. *Carma* is hot and fiery racing, but the best part is killing old biddies that get in your way – and especially the ones that don't. I just look at it as a viable alternative to euthanasia. But don't tell my granny."

CARMAGEDDON II



CARPOCALYPSE
Now

NOVEMBER



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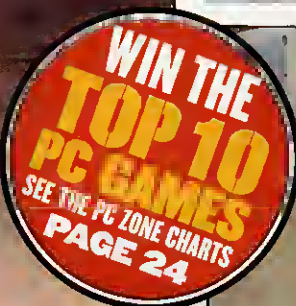




54 X-COM ALLIANCE What do you say to an X-COM game with 3D combat courtesy of the Unreal engine? "Bye bye, social life"; "See ya, work"; "Sorry, love, I've..."



96 NEED FOR SPEED III Just what *Dukes Of Hazard* fans have been waiting for. This, speed freaks, is the kind of game that networks were invented for. *Vroooooom...*



94 RAINBOW SIX Strategic-thinking *Quake* fan? This could be for you.



146 COMMANDOS Walk it like Steve Hill talks it, and save your arse.

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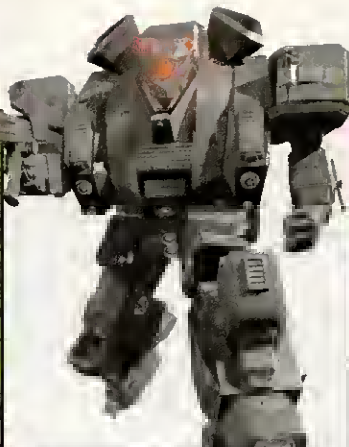
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76 OBSESSED WITH STAR TREK Meet the Klingon who fell to Earth.



“A game that is a ghoulish dream come true for fans of the original”

COVER STORY 86-90 CARMAGEDDON II Drive like a maniac, and watch the blood fly – again!

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Quite literally the best games news section in the universe

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We want your vote for the best games of 1998. You decide who wins the accolades

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Forthcoming games featuring robots, and one man's obsession with all things *Star Trek* – especially Klingons

72 THE RISE OF THE ROBOTS

'Mechs are now the coolest ingredient for the latest action and strategy games

76 OBSESSED WITH STAR TREK

He is not Nick Oakley, he's a Klingon called Nerith.

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Lots of stuff about stuff. Or something

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We collared ten PC game players and asked what turns them on

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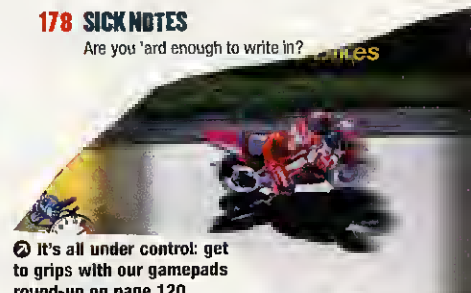
See how the *ZONE* team fared on Wireplay this month

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Are you 'ard enough to write in?



It's all under control: get to grips with our gamepads round-up on page 120.

WIN! THE COMPO NO ONE FINDS Correctly answer this month's cover question and you could win a box full of PC goodies. Send your entry on the back of a postcard addressed to: **The Compo No One Finds, PC ZONE, 18 Boleover Street, London W1P 7HL.** The first entry with the most correct answers plucked out of the hat wins. The Editor's decision is final. Closing date: Wednesday 25 November. The winner of our September cover compo was Justine Morris, who correctly named the two men behind CM3 as Paul and Oliver Collier, and wins copies of *Unreal*, *Subur 2050* and a *Page 3D* gamepad.

IT'S NOT DRIVING MISS DAISY

We're awash with driving games this issue, with no less than four major releases coming under the PC ZONE microscope. As you've probably worked out by now, top of the list is obviously *Carmageddon II* (see page 86), which we had serious doubts about at first. Could it really offer much more than the first game? Charlie Brooker wasn't so sure but was determined to find out. Dragging his girlfriend along to the offices of Stainless in the Isle of Wight one rainy September weekend, Charlie set out to discover the truth. When SCI greeted their arrival with a bottle of champagne and a mammoth box of chocolates, Charlie was convinced *Carmageddon II* wasn't going to be up to scratch. "They tried to bribe me and everything but I wasn't

having any of it," Charlie claimed on his return to the PC ZONE offices.

After spending an entire weekend careering around virtual cities blithely flattening pedestrians and zombies, Charlie declared the game a sure-fire hit. "I'll eat my, er, arse if this doesn't win Game Of The Year award 1998," he announced, wiping a stray entrail off the end of his nose.

Charlie claims the VIP treatment played no part in his scoring decision. All the same, we'll be keeping an eye on him over the next couple of weeks to make sure he doesn't turn up at the office in a Ferrari Testarossa.

But it's not all blood and mayhem. By comparison, EA's *Need For Speed III* is notably sedate, without a single blood-soaked pile-up to its name. Thankfully the gameplay is sufficiently tasty to

elevate this third game in the series to Classic status (see page 96). Formula 1 fans are also well accommodated with the combined releases of *Monaco Grand Prix* (page 100) and *Grand Prix Legends* (page 104), both of which take Formula 1 simulations on the PC to new heights, albeit in completely different ways.

If you want to voice your opinion on which are the best games of 1998, you need to register your vote on page 42. Who knows, you might even get the chance to watch Charlie Brooker eat his own arse. Scary.

Chris Anderson, Deputy Editor

GET IN TOUCH

We want to know what you think of PC ZONE so that we can make it even better. Send your thoughts and opinions to me at: **PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ**. Better yet, email me at mhigham@dennis.co.uk.

MEET THE ZONE TEAM

All PC ZONE's reviewers are experts in their field. We like to give every game that comes in for review the best chance, which is why we give it to a reviewer who's a fan of the genre



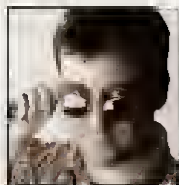
Jeremy Wells

What's on your hard drive? *Need For Speed III*, *Actua Tennis*, *Monaco Grand Prix*
Best games ever: *Championship Manager 2*, *Age Of Empires* and *Gran Turismo* (PSX)
Favourite genres: Sports and racing
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: David Beckham



Chris Anderson

What's on your hard drive? *Civ 2* and *Age Of Empires*
Best games ever: *X-COM: Apocalypse*, *Final Fantasy VII* (PSX), *Ultima VII* and *Midwinter*
Favourite genres: RPGs, strategy and adventure
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Luca Vialli if he keeps changing the Chelsea team



Paul Mallinson

What's on your hard drive? *Civ Virus*, *Eraserbots*, *Quake II*
Best games ever: *Resident Evil II*, *Super Tennis* (SNES), *Quake II*
Favourite genres: "3D shooters at the moment"
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Vanessa Feltz deserves to be run over repeatedly



Richie Shoemaker

What's on your hard drive? *Rainbow Six*, *HardWar*, *Shogo* (beta)
Best games ever: *Elite* (BBC) and *Doom*
Favourite genres: Real-time strategy and 3D shoot 'em ups
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Parsley The Lion. The bastard haunted my childhood dreams



David McCandless

What's on your hard drive? *X-Files*, *SIN*, *Klingon: Honour Guard*
Best games ever: *Ultima Underworld*, *Doom* (first episode) and *Resident Evil II*
Favourite genres: 3D shooters
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: JRR Tolkien (yes, I know he's already dead)



Charlie Brooker

What's on your hard drive? *Deer Hunter*, *Creatures 2*, *Carmia II* demo
Best games ever: *Quake II*, *Puzzle Bobble* and *Tekken 3* (PSX)
Favourite genres: Action, strategy and point-and-click adventures
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Alistair Stewart from *Police Camera Action*



Steve Hill

What's on your hard drive? *ISS 98* (N64) *Sensi European Club Edition*, *Grand Prix Legends*
Best games ever: *Sensi Soccer*, *ISS 64* (N64), *Manic Miner* (Spectrum)
Favourite genres: Football, driving and 3D shoot 'em ups
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Paul Mallinson



Keith Pullin

What's on your hard drive? *Carmageddon*, *Unreal*, *TA: Core Contingency*, *Incoming*
Best games ever: *Total Annihilation* and *Doom v.1*
Favourite genres: Real-time strategy and driving
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Michael Schumacher



Phil Wand

What's on your hard drive? *Starquake*, *Sentinel Returns*
Favourite genres: Strategy and sports
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Anne Robinson or Denise Van Outen



Warren Christmas

What's on your hard drive? *World Cup 98*, *Rainbow Six*, *Jimmy White's 2: Cueball*, *HardWar*
Favourite genres: Football and other sports titles, driving sims and real-time strategy games
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: David Beckham



Andrew Wright

What's on your hard drive? Nothing – just botched a Win98 installation. But *MechCommander* and *Art Of War* will be back soon
Best games ever: *Dungeon Master*, *Civ II*, *Doom* and *C&C*
Favourite genres: War games, strategy games and war games (in that order)
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: My tax inspector



Denise

What's on your hard drive? *Starquake*, *Sentinel Returns*
Favourite genres: Strategy and sports
Fave person to see as a pedestrian in Carmia II: Anne Robinson or Denise Van Outen

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WIN! Which cricket game received a pounding from ZONE which upset the publisher? Send your entry on the back of a postcard to: I've read the small print, PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ by Monday 5 October. Winner and prize announced here next issue. Last issue we had three entries but Thomas Mudd from Cheshire wins the PC ZONE grab bag of goodies.

TIPS LINE: 0171 917 7698
Thursdays 2.30pm – 6.30pm only

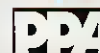
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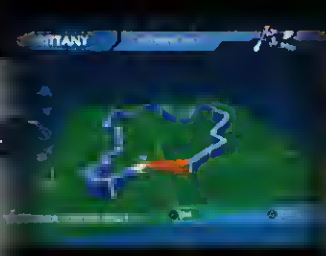
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MAILBOX

What's next after virtual reality, the pros and cons of Wireplay, feel-good games and a bunch of sad gits? They all put their feet up and take a break in the **PC ZONE** departure lounge

★ ANSWERED BY The ZONE Crew

CONTACT INFO

If your letter is selected as 'Letter of the Month' we'll send you some promotional goodies, a game and maybe even some hardware!

WRITE TO Mailbox, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk

CHAT FORUM If you've got something pressing to say, check out the 'lively' chat forum on our website. Point your browser at www.pczone.co.uk for further info.

TOO MANY FIGHTING GAMES

Why do so many of the new computer games seem to be based on fighting, death, crime and war? The majority of the new games are about death and destruction; many of them are good, but not just because they contain death, murder etc. There should be more feel-good games, or even more sports sims.

John Kaye

★ Or what about *Sindy Goes Shopping* or *Teletubbies Do Telford*? Death and destruction make for tense and engaging stories – that's why violent movies are so popular. Try and come up with some feel-good game ideas and you'll see how difficult it is.

ALL ACTION

Action Quake II is the finest piece of Quakeness ever and even better than *Quake* and

Quake II put together. This is a mod for *Quake II* that has all the good stuff found in your favourite action films (big machine guns, dual pistols à la John Woo, sniper rifles and sawn-off shotguns). I seriously advise you to get it quickly, as it's the mutt's nuts. I play it one-on-one on a LAN and it rocks – I can't imagine what it would be like on your massive network. You should shove it on the cover disc so others can enjoy it.

David Murray

★ Our Richie was online playing *Action Quake* just last week – see page 174 to see how it went. He's fast becoming an addict.

CM3 STINKS

Why call it *Championship Manager 3* when it looks no different to the last two games? I read your article in issue 67 and it seems the only big difference is a Japanese league and a couple of other new ones that nobody wants! I then realised the reason for CM3 – it's so that they can punch £40 out of us. Well, not me!

Derek Littler

★ We are amazed that you can be so judgmental about a game you have never seen. Why not do the sensible thing and wait until the game comes out before voicing your ill-informed opinions in the pages of *PC ZONE*?

CM2 was perhaps a bit samey but this is the most different of all the CM games. It's much more tactical, has B teams, loads more players and the chance to nurture young youth players. Jeremy puts money on it being one of the biggest selling games of all time and will gladly accept a small wager from you – you can email him on dh50@dial.pipex.com.



"The BBFC passing *Carmageddon II* is as likely as Fatima Whitbread starring in the *Tomb Raider* film"

GOOD CARMA

As *Carmageddon II* is poised for release, you voice your concerns about what we'll see in the finished game

"Oh no, here we go again," I thought as I read the preview of *Carmageddon II*. Surely you were tormenting us on purpose with the wonderfully masochistic and extremely gory goings on in the sequel to, in my opinion, the most innovative and satisfying game of last year? It seems to me that the chances of the BBFC ever classifying the game as suitable for us Brits are as likely as Fatima Whitbread playing the role of Lara Croft in the forthcoming *Tomb Raider* movie. While last year *PC ZONE* stopped me from returning *Carma* to the shop with 'that patch', I fear that the problem won't be so easily remedied this time around, with the polygonal peds and their detachable limbs being far more advanced than the sprites of the original. Please tell me the developers have some trick up their sleeve to get the game passed, or that the ZONE team have acquired the rights to an unofficial patch upon the game's release.

Anthony Gibbins

The forthcoming release of *Carmageddon II* will no doubt provoke fresh controversy aimed squarely at the PC gaming public. If, like the last game it is initially shipped with zombies, there will be an outcry among gamers and the gaming press. On the other hand, a 'people release' will grant reactionary newspapers further licence to go on an anti-games witch hunt.

Personally, I won't be bothered either way. I don't think that replacing humans with zombies detracts much from the game's appeal. Mowing down pensioners and kiddies is simply a gimmick and a novelty that wears off pretty quickly. The real beauty of it is its free-form gameplay, the multiple paths to victory and the quality of the game environment, all of which the sequel looks to better.

SCI and Stainless will probably push the people issue as far as they can, and the overturning of the BBFC ruling on the last game should set a handy precedent for them to maintain their original vision. However, as the game's graphics improve the BBFC will have a stronger case due to increased photo realism, and SCI might have to start shouting a lot louder. I hope they don't. The *Carmageddon* series of games are excellent anyway. An insistence on having 'real people' to run over betrays both the thoughtful underlying game mechanics and the obvious inventiveness of their talented creators.

Pap Taylor

FROM THE WEBSITE

A selection of your comments from the *PC ZONE* website. Get your voice heard – head to www.pczone.co.uk now

Anyone wetting their gussets over this new *Star Trek* game? Or shall I be the only one brave enough to say how much I'm looking forward to shooting some Trekkie characters on my ickle screen? Tick here if you think I am a geek...

nospam

I've pre-ordered the new *Star Trek* game. I want to know if you can shoot the pasties off the Klingons' heads!

robbo6

I just played that *Quake* movie that came with *PCZ* a couple of months ago. What a joke. It's so tacky, and is just like you'd imagine, judging by the photo of the

guy who made it. What a waste of time. I'd suggest that he spent his time socialising or shagging, but looking at his photo...

Nevada

Oh, give him a break – why don't you try doing a *Quake* movie? I bet it wouldn't be half as good.

Abbadon

I've just bought the September Issue and the *Carmageddon II* demo is f**king amazing. I can't wait for the full game. Well done on getting the exclusive demo (and an exclusive car, by the look of it!). Keep up the excellent work.

Ed Pearson



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FIGHTING TALK

I just want to say that that woman who made the comment about women being as good as men at PC games was talking a load of bullshit. You can tell that unintelligent Miss Tamara that I'd kick her ass at any game with my eyes closed. Women's minds are too small to cope with anything harder than washing the dishes!

Joshua Batty

While your mind, of course, is the size of a small planet. It's just a shame you don't use it, eh?

ANTI-REALITY

I sometimes wonder about modern technology. I mean, where is it going to stop? We've had the '2D era', now we're in the '3D era', and next it'll be Virtual Reality... but what then?! What is beyond Reality?

The reason games appeal is that they aren't real, and you have the freedom to let out your anger, sorrow and

whatever else, on a computer game – unless you're a sadist and take out your anger on people instead.

Take *Grand Theft Auto* for instance. It's a great game, with 100% gameplay, 0% reality! The *Quake* series is the same. In fact I bet that nearly every single game that got to the top of the charts has a reality factor of zero. Imagine playing *GTA* if it was 100% real – driving around in your Ford Escort 1.3, getting stuck in traffic jams, beeping your horn. Or try *Quake II* in the forest with your Smith & Weston BB Gun. Now they don't sound like fun. What will games be like in 2010?

Chris 'PO' Godfrey

No one is proposing that games become so realistic that they're exactly the same as real life. What would be the point? The aim is to get closer and closer to realistic graphics, realistic interaction and real physics models. You shouldn't feel like you're

“Women as good as men at PC games – bullshit. Their minds are too small to cope with anything harder than washing up!”

JOSHUA BATTY

YOU'RE HAVIN' A LAUGH!

I've always been a loyal reader of *PC ZONE*, but your 'new look' – I know what you're up to and you must be having a laugh! Issue #65, page 52-53, Hugh Hancock – he isn't real, just look at those pictures – he's definitely a cardboard cut-out! Issue #67, page 80, Paul 'God' Collyer – he isn't real either, stiff as a (card) board. You're having a laugh and I think it's disgusting!

I understand you must cut costs due to your new 'aggressive' pricing policy, but why not go the whole hog and replace everyone with Mr Potato Head instead?

Gareth Smout

We can assure you that both Hugh and Paul are completely real – we can't afford to buy cardboard cut-outs as a direct result of our new 'aggressive pricing policy'.



Cardboard cut-outs? No, but they do share the same dentist.

SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

I was just skimming through your magazine recently when I saw a picture that made me wonder. In issue #65 on page 167 there is a picture of Adam Phillips. Or is it Niles from Channel Four comedy *Frasier*? Separated at birth...?

Bill Henderson



Adam will never speak to us again after this.

sat at a computer at all, but inside a real car surrounded by all the elements you'd expect to find in a bona fide vehicle – sights, sounds and smells. That's when a game will really blow you away.

MULTIPLAYING

Until four months ago I was playing games on a 486 with no 3D card and no modem. I was really pissed off with your mag for printing so much crap about how good 3D cards were and how you were all having so much fun playing on your lovely office LAN and blasting people all over the Net. Then I got a brand spanking new kick ass ultra ninja/samurai bastard PC with a 3D card and a 56k modem. I have now seen the error of my ways and I am glad that I didn't send in a letter of complaint.

Now I thank Christ that computer games have moved away from *Space Invaders*, as I take the same point of view as Charlie Brooker (who, by the way, deserves a much bigger section in the mag). 3D acceleration is the best thing to come to games in a very long time, except maybe for multiplayer gaming over the Net or Wireplay. I now play multiplayer *Quake* almost nonstop and must lay off before I get fused to my chair. To others who haven't upgraded yet, I want to say: 'Stop moaning about 3D games – they're fantastic. 3D cards only cost about 80 quid and will increase your gamesplaying fun no end...'

Daniel Smalley

So let's get this right – you're saying *PC ZONE* done good? But of course, mon cheri.

SAD DEMISE

Sorry to hear that *PC ZONE* is soon to be no more, or at least that's the story doing the rounds. Why? Well, the rumour goes that you're rapidly disappearing up British Telecom's asshole, stopping off at their over-priced, over-plugged Wireplay service for refreshments on the way.

Why not tell people that they can play *Quake*, *Quake II*, *Unreal* etc for free, providing they are online already. All you have to do is get Gamespy, make sure you have the latest patches for online play for the various games, and away you go – no expensive BT service. Why give them more money when they screw us enough as it is?

Anthony Rendle

We've passed on that information in the past, but I'm pleased to reiterate it. Anyone interested in playing online games should also check out our online news on page 30.

WOW

I've recently decided to ignore my phone bill and see what this Wireplay thing is all about. WOW (big letters and much shouting). I thought I was pretty good at *Quake II*, until I bought in to 'Real Quake' on the Net. Amazing – the challenge is quite refreshing. I was absolutely hammered. Having hooked up for four days, I've now spent nearly all of next month's salary.

Can I say thanks to Fever, Goldfish, Stouty and Pony Boy for teaching me how to a) lose gracefully and b) seek revenge, but in a caring way.

Mr Stab (aka The Director)

Have a word with Mr Rendle, will you? ☹

SHORT AND SWEET

Keep your letter short and you're more likely to get a reply in *PC ZONE*

WORMAGEDDON

I was wondering how come there have been no previews, reviews, or news about the new *Worms* game that is going to end the current series.

James Long

Due to a distinct lack of preview materials on *Wormageddon* we haven't been able to cover the game in any great detail. Expect a preview closer to Christmas though.

YOU WHAT?

In Hotline you said that the *Unreal* editor would go on sale on 31 August, but since it was packaged with *Unreal* I see no reason why it would be sold separately.

Eddie Amphlett

The editor released with *Unreal* is a scaled-down version. The complete package will have many new features which is why it's being sold separately. And because GT want lots more money, obviously.

H3D?

Where is all the gas on H3D glasses? They sound like the biz from what all the users are saying online. Even though I'd liked to have read some info about them in *PC ZONE*, I couldn't resist ordering a pair.

Paz Islam

We haven't seen the gas anywhere. Sorry.

QUAKE EDITORS

You did a feature on making your own *Quake* level but in your boxout on other editors you failed to mention the most decent one of all (bar *BSP*) which is *Qoole*, *Quake Object-Oriented Level Editor*. Although the shareware limits you, it has some great features and is easy to set up. *Qoole* is great for beginners and experts, and although *BSP* beats it by the skin of its teeth, *Qoole* totally annihilates *World Craft*, *QED* and *DMmaker's* asses! Visit www.qoolw.com. I think you'll be surprised.

Richard Price

We stand corrected. *Quake* fans, take Richard's advice and check out *Qoole*, which is indeed one of the best *Quake* editors around.

DA



"What? Am I a funny guy? Do I amuse you?"



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Joshua Batty

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Bill Henderson



Adam will never speak to us again after this.

sat at a computer at all, but inside a real car

SAD DEMISE

Sorry to hear that PCZone

Now there's a motley crew of unwelcoming blokes. Dare you to run up and kiss one.

SO YOU FANCY YOURSELF AS THE KINGPIN

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER XatnX

PUBLISHER Interplay

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE Spring '99

IN SUMMARY

Cross *Goodfellas* with *The City Of Lost Children*, sprinkle it with *Quake II*-flavoured icing, add a bit of blue language, and you've got *Kingpin*.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Kingpin boasts superb graphics and sound effects. It runs on an improved version of the *Quake II* engine. There's lots of swearing! And Cypress Hill! And an agreeably gritty tone!

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

May offend wusses, or help contribute to eventual bloody downfall of society as we know it.

We gasped when we saw this. And you know why? It was outta *respect*. We hang out on the street, chew a matchstick and dream of being a Kingpin

★ REPORT Charlie Brooker



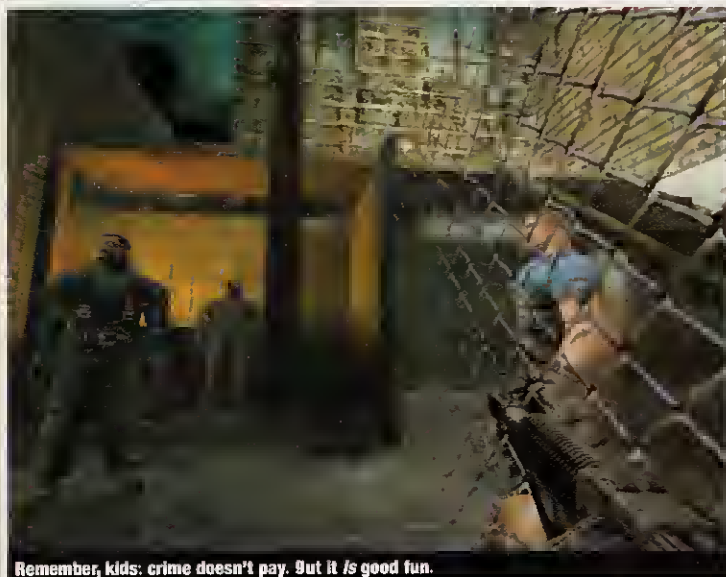
The graphics are genuinely eye-popping. Thank the *Quake II* engine for that.



"What? Am I a funny guy? Do I amuse you?"



Rumours of a Pesci-style 'pen attack' abound.



Remember, kids: crime doesn't pay. But it *is* good fun.



☹ You're just another victim, kid.

For many moons now, spontaneous impersonations of *Goodfellas*-era Joe Pesci have been a regular staple of *ZONE* office 'life'. Scarcely a day goes by without some kind of impromptu tough-guy dialogue turning the air blue, usually delivered in an excruciatingly bad approximation of a Bronx accent: "You foggin' muddafoggah," we cry at each other. "Why, I oughta bust yo' balls, ya foggin' monkey." That kind of thing. We're hilarious.

Anyway, it seems we're not the only ones. Pesci's terrifying tirades have pervaded the global conscience. A Pepsi ad campaign currently airing on US TV features a little girl with Pesci's voice, remonstrating a café owner for serving "the other cola". And now there's this: *Kingpin*, a kind of *Quake* meets *Goodfellas* first-person shooter.

It's sure to offend many by virtue of its two main features: ultra-violence and gutter language.

Yes, swearing. The odd swearword has cropped up in games before, but *never* have our ears witnessed such a torrential flow of profanity. *Kingpin*, you see, is set in the world of the underground urban criminal – a demographic not traditionally noted for its linguistic restraint.

Actually, it's genuinely shocking. The enemies in *Kingpin* don't just run at you, guns blazing, they shout, "Yo, kill this motherf***er" first.

“Never before have our ears witnessed such a torrential flow of profanity”

Add to this a blistering soundtrack courtesy of blunt-smoking rap legends Cypress Hill (who also contribute some of the dialogue), and you've got an authentically atmospheric experience.

The game uses an enhanced version of the familiar *Quake II* engine, and having seen it running at September's ECTS show we can vouch for its speed, fluidity, and superior animation. We can also confirm that, *Carmageddon II* aside, it's one of the most violent games you're likely to come across this year.

Set in a slightly skewed version of the present day, blending a '30s-style Chicago gangster ethos with '90s urban grime, *Kingpin* nevertheless looks unerringly realistic. There's plenty of machine-gun-toting mayhem at that. Claret all over the shop, in other words. The superb sound effects add to the fun no end.

As a player, your aim is simple: starting out as a lowly, put-upon

street punk, you must rise to the dizzying heights of mafioso Mister Big, the *Kingpin* of the title. Achieving this daunting task isn't easy, and you'll have to bust a few heads to get there. Strong stomachs only need apply – the developers aren't ruling out torture scenes, in which your character wrings information out of rival hoods by being spectacularly horrid to them. With implements.

It's not the first unconventional 3D shooter from developers Xatrix, they were also responsible for last year's hick-baiting *Redneck Rampage* (another game with its own fair share of cuss words). In this country, *Redneck* was unfairly overlooked; *Kingpin* looks set to fare much better. We're keeping a close eye on this one, and so should you. More news as we get it. Ya goddam lunk-assed moddahfoggers. Geddoudaheah! ☑



The first two *Discworld* games were quest-based, using traditional object puzzles to make up the majority of the gameplay. *Discworld Noir* is nothing like these.

TERRY PRATCHETT RETURNS IN DISCWORLD NOIR

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER Perfect Entertainment

PUBLISHER GT Interactive

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE March '99

IN SUMMARY

Third instalment in the ever-so-popular *Discworld* series brings PC adventure gaming into the new millennium. With 3D graphics and everything.

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Graphically, *Discworld Noir* is far more advanced than previous instalments. The game also mixes a variety of visual styles to keep things interesting throughout. At the end of the day though, it's *Discworld*, innit?

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Can too much pre-rendered art be bad for a game's health?

Terry Pratchett and Perfect Entertainment team up again to bring us the third title in the *Discworld* adventure series

REPORT Paul Mallinson





Progress comes from using clues to trap people into making careless mistakes... or by resorting to common or garden intimidation.



Nigel Planer, Robert Lewellyn and Kate Robbins are all working on the character voices for the game.



This is Lewton, the lead character in *Discworld Noir*. Surly looking fella, isn't he?



Expect some weird and wonderful contraptions to spring up on your travels.

➔ An obvious candidate for the obligatory in-game fart gag.



Perfect Entertainment have already proved their worth in the adventure game genre. The original *Discworld* sold shitloads the world over, and was awarded a superlative 96 per cent way back in PCZ #22. The second game in the series, *Missing, Presumed...!?*, sold even more, and again scored over 90 per cent in PCZ #44. With this in mind, we can only look forward to good things from the third episode, due for release from GT Interactive at the end of March '99.

Discworld Noir, as it's to be known, is again based on the characters created by Terry Pratchett and made famous in his slew of fantasy novels, except this time Rincewind isn't in it, and it isn't based on any of his existing books. Perfect themselves have written the story, and it's already been approved by Mr Pratchett. In fact, according to Luci Black, Producer of *Discworld Noir*,

Pratchett "thought it was great and didn't want us to change a thing". High praise indeed. But what is this new *Discworld* adventure all about?

"It's typically 'film noir' in style," Luci explains. You're a private investigator. You used to be a member of the city guard, but were kicked out for reasons which become clear during the game. If you think of films like *The Big Sleep*, *Casablanca* and *The Maltese Falcon*, there's a lot of that sort of element in there. At the beginning of the game you have a 'femme fatale' come to you with a case, which is very

“Pratchett thought it was brilliant and didn't want us to change a thing”

LUCI BLACK, PRODUCER

typically film noir in execution, and this case turns out to be far bigger than you at first imagined."

"The centre of the new game is the notebook," Luci continues. "This is like an inventory, but for clues. There are over 60 clues in the notebook -

for example: names of characters, rumours you have heard, details of murders, plus over 20 objects in the inventory that function like clues. All these clues and objects can be used as conversation topics for any character in the game. Of course, not all characters can help you, but they will all say something intelligent, or insulting, if you talk to them about anything in the notebook."

The look of the game is to radically change too, as Luci points out: "It's not 2D any more, it's 3D. The backdrops are pre-rendered at a very high resolution, and the main character is rendered in real-time 3D. It'll all be light-sourced in real-time too."

The new, main character, voice acted by Rob Bryden (*Spitting Image*, *Lock Stock & Two Smoking Barrels*), is called Lewton, and is currently made from over 2000 polygons. "Not all the characters will be real-time though," Luci told us.

"We kind of view this as an intermediate step on the road to full real-time adventuring. We didn't want to do a fully real-time game right now because you cannot get the character detail that you need - obviously a huge part of the game is character interaction, trying to work out the motivations of characters. We wanted to stick with the pre-rendered characters to some extent so that we could get more 'life' into them."

The interface itself will remain 'point-and-click' for most of the game. "We reckon that keeping the ability to sweep the cursor around the screen, and not having to walk up to everything you want to look at, is the direction we'd rather go," says Luci.

The much loved *Discworld* humour will also remain, although this time we're told to expect something far darker and more sinister. As Luci points out: "It wouldn't be *Discworld* without the comedy in there." **EW**

GOT ME A DOSE

REPORT Paul Mallinson, News Ed.



This month my hard drive went down with a virus. The CIH, virus to be precise. Although it is

often difficult to identify the source of these malicious little TSRs (Terminate and Stay Resident), we are pretty much certain that it came from the very first downloadable version of *Wing Commander: Secret Ops*. Not that I want to single out Origin for a good hiding. I don't. The CIH virus has been slowly infecting the online gaming community for the past two months, attaching itself to EXE, DLL and COM files the world over.

Who writes these viruses is anyone's guess. After my recent experience I came to the conclusion that it must have been either complete and utter wankers, or a highly paid programmer at an anti-virus software company. But then I was very angry at the time.

And I'm not the only person to have fallen foul of this deadly plague, either. A couple of rival magazines recently ran into trouble with viruses on cover CDs which can only have made the problem worse. Reports of the effects of these viruses vary, and some people even claim that CIH is actually harmless. The problems I've encountered as a result of simply *detecting* the CIH virus contradict this. It took hours to repair every file it had infected, and even then, because of the virulence of the damn thing, I still couldn't be sure my system was rid of it.

I have to grit my teeth when I say this: I recommend you check your system now, and especially if you download demos regularly or read second-rate PC games magazines. If your PC is infected, don't panic. Take deep breaths, nail your doors to the wall at a 30-degree angle, and wear something white - the end of the world is nigh...

THE PCZONE CHARTS

The games you buy counted.

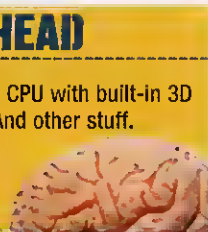
P.24



TECH HEAD

This month: a CPU with built-in 3D capabilities. And other stuff.

P.28



BEEN AND GONE: ECTS '98

Another September, another ECTS. The European Computer Trade Show exploded in usual style on the weekend of the 6th, at Olympia in London, with over 200 PC games on display from developers, distributors and publishers from almost every corner of the globe.

Some big announcements were made on the first day, including confirmation of the Activision and LucasArts publishing deal, plus the acquisition of the *Braveheart* licence by Scottish developers Red Lemon (see right for more details). On top of that, Michael Owen put in a guest appearance at the Eidos stand, as did Nell McAndrew - the perfectly formed, real-life version of Lara Croft. Even the Telerubbies were there.

PC ZONE caught the lot of it in true 'gonzo' fashion. Bleary-eyed and sheened in sweat, we went in search of the latest and greatest PC games. What you read over the next few pages is the result of our truffling...



The biggest downloadable giveaway ever? At 120 Mb you had better believe it.

THE SECRET'S OUT

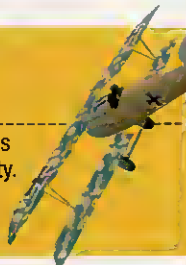
If you hadn't already noticed, we've got the first episode of *Wing Commander: Secret Ops* on our cover disc. Call it a sequel, call it an expansion pack; call it Trevor if you want to. Whatever, all you need know is that it's free and that you don't need a copy of any of the previous *Wing Commander* games to play it. We'll have the following three

episodes on next month's disc (fingers crossed) and three more the month after, making 56 missions in total. If you can't wait until then, go to www.secretops.com and prepare yourself for a seriously huge phone bill.

★ Check out page 165 for details on how to play.

ONLINE
ZONEHollywood defiles
online community.

P.30



CITIES

Find out what this
pert-breasted young
lady has been buying.

P.31

PLAYSTATION
ZONEConsole games to
sell your soul for.

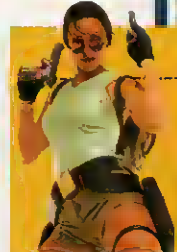
P.33



HOTLINE

The definitive
listing of new PC
games to buy.

P.40



OWEN SIGNS WORLD LEAGUE SOCCER DEAL

Michael Owen liked *World League Soccer* so much that he asked to be in the sequel

★ REPORT Steve Hill

At least three weeks after the distinctly average *World League Soccer '98*, the sequel is almost upon us. This incarnation will carry the lofty title of *Michael Owen's World League Soccer '99*, publishers Eidos having procured the services of the Liverpool and England star. His decision to put his name to the game was based mainly on the fact that he was a fan of the first effort, not to

mention the small matter of hundreds of thousands of pounds. Again developed by Silicon Dreams, *WLS '99* will apparently feature 'skinned' models and include more 'bones' in the skeletal system. You what?

★ Michael Owen's *World League Soccer '99* is out in November.



Red Lemon snap up film licence for
Mel Gibson's *Braveheart*.

TARTAN ARMY RENAMED BRAVEHEART

In an amazing coup by Glasgow-based developers Red Lemon, *Tartan Army*, the forthcoming 'Myth in Kilts' real-time strategy game due next year from Eidos, is to be renamed *Braveheart* after the Mel Gibson film. The licencing deal, thrashed out recently with Paramount Studios, entitles Red Lemon to the film's visual properties, and as such may delay the game slightly as changes are made to the story and graphics.



Ohmygod, it's a Lee Dixon 'special'. Duck!



Better animation. But better gameplay? Only time will tell.



© PIC AllSport



The *Second Age* is almost upon us...

UO'S (FINALLY) COMING HOME

After much campaigning, British *Ultima Online* fanatics are finally going to get what they've always wanted: UK-based *UO* servers. Not only that, but the service is also expected to go online at the same time as the retail release of *Ultima Online: The Second Age* — an expansive new upgrade that not only adds to the ever-growing *UO*

game world, but also comes with a new, improved interface.

Origin's *UO* tech guru Richard Vogel made the announcement online on Jed Norton's Clan UK website: "We are definitely putting shards in the UK," he began, before revealing how advanced the operation actually was: "We are shipping

the equipment over to the UK right now and hope to get it installed this month. We don't have a firm date yet for when they will go live, but I will let you know the date as we get closer to completing our installation."

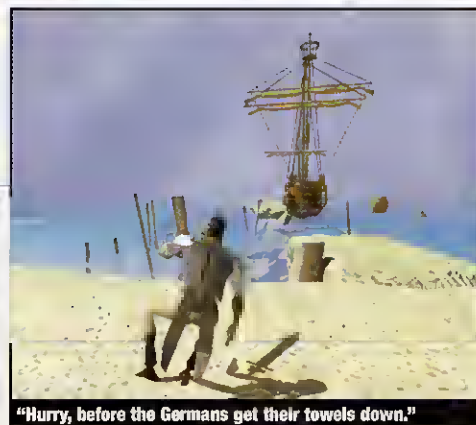
★ EA are looking to release the boxed version of *The Second Age* before Christmas.



The fluidity of the animation really does have to be seen to be believed, and it's not even motion-captured.



"Just popping out for... Shit! It's high tide! Aaaargh..."



"Hurry, before the Germans get their towels down."

TOMB RAIDER GUYS' NEW GAME

The men who spawned Lara walk the plank and come up fighting

ON BOARD Keith Pullin

Galleon, from newly formed Bristol-based developer Confounding Factor, is sailing towards completion, and at the helm are Paul Douglas and Toby Gard, original members of the first *Tomb Raider* team and largely responsible for putting the wiggle in Lara's strut and the melons in her bra.

Evidently that Midas touch hasn't deserted them. This immensely talented duo have returned with another flamboyant third-person action/slash 'em up, and this time they've installed that

unmistakable strength of personality on an entire crew of gallant treasure hunters. Among them are Rhama, our swashbuckling hero, and Faith, a busty redhead who looks like she could crack nuts with alarming originality.

Tenderly animated and drawn (all without motion-capture assistance), these hearties also boast another resounding attribute – fabulous AI. When you're not controlling them, they actually help out by completing tasks themselves. Looks, personality and brains – what more could you ask for? Quality gameplay, perhaps? Well, it looks like we're going to get that too.

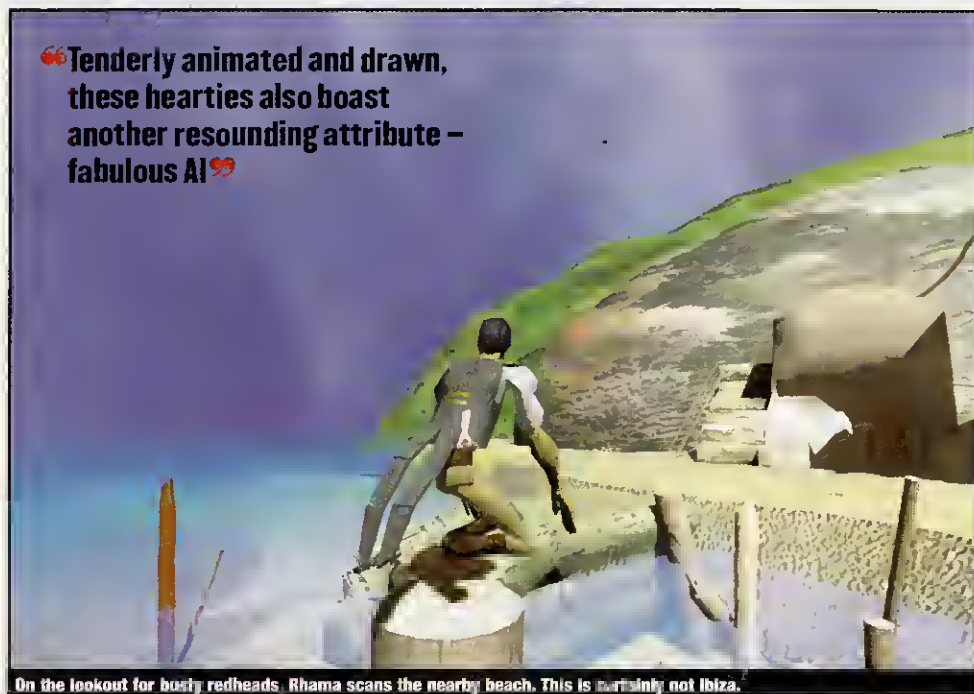
Gone are the days of miserably lining up on an item to pick it up; you can lock-on to the object you want, and then simply wander past and scoop it up

in one fluid motion. The idea is to ensure that *Galleon* is as playable as possible regardless of your gaming prowess.

Like *Monkey Island 2*, the action takes place on a variety of islands, but all similarities with that game – or indeed any other *Monkey Island* offering – end there. *Galleon* is a serious attempt to create an unforgiving environment where being pushed off the end of a plank into the snapping jaws of a dozen hungry sharks is a very real possibility.

Galleon is no ship of fools, and Confounding Factor are well aware that a first game can make or break a company. In the case of *Galleon* and Confounding Factor, we can safely assume this is one new development outfit who won't be going overboard (Guffaw – Ed). [EW]

“Tenderly animated and drawn, these hearties also boast another resounding attribute – fabulous AI”



On the lookout for busty redheads, Rhama scans the nearby beach. This is certainly not Ibiza.



Who says adventure games are dead?



Galleon will be one of the biggest games of 1999.



The final look of *Good & Evil* has yet to be decided upon, but already it is looking brilliant.

RON GILBERT RETURNS



Now tell us that adventure gaming is dead.

Where do gaming legends go to die? Stupid question – legends live for ever

If the term 'legend' could be applied to anyone, Ron Gilbert is that man. The twisted genius behind LucasArts' comedy adventures *Maniac Mansion* and *The Secret Of Monkey Island* is far from dead, and is in fact working on his opus, *Good & Evil*. Though not due until late '99 through GT Interactive,

the game is described by Gilbert as containing "the party building of a role-playing game and the interface of a real-time strategy game".

Though the final look of *Good & Evil* is still being decided upon, it's likely to evolve into a real-time, top-down, 3D role-playing game featuring a quest that spans a huge kingdom populated by medieval knights, pirates, er, cowboys and, ah, cyborgs. So, not your usual poncey mix of orcs and magic, then.

DESERT ISLAND CDS

If Matt Sullivan, Development Manager at Stainless Software, was stuck on a desert island with nothing but a PC, an unlimited power supply and five games of his choice, which would those games be?



- ★ *Might & Magic VI* (Ubi Soft)
- ★ *Carmageddon II* (SCI)
- ★ *Daggerfall** (Virgin)
- ★ *Commandos* (Eidos)
- ★ *Total Annihilation* (GT Interactive)

*If only one choice allowed

Comment "I like games with a lot of originality in them. I'd have to have a couple of my solo 'up-until-4am' jobs to keep me going through those long, lonely nights. It sounds a bit shit, I know, but I'd have to have a copy of *Carmageddon II* with me as well. If it were only one game, it would have to be *Daggerfall*, because I keep going back to it and I can really immerse myself in it for weeks at a time. Oh, I forgot about *Civilization II*. That makes six, doesn't it? F**k it, we're used to breaking the rules."



This living creature is totally unique.
He inherited genes from his parents.
He will learn to talk. Feel pain. Be excited.
Suffer illness. Grow to adulthood.
Perhaps fall in love and have babies.
But for now he needs constant love and attention.

CHARTS

Are you biding your time waiting for those hyped but ultimately disappointing Christmas blockbusters? Or have you rushed out to buy *International Cricket Captain*? Here are this month's charts...



Back to Number One: hats off to Eidos' *Commandos*.

CHART COMMENT

Fox Interactive's *X-Files: The Game* has mysteriously tumbled from the top slot this month. Presumably you've all started reading the reviews – after all, the truth is out there, somewhere...

Replacing it, and regaining the Number One spot, is the ever-popular *Commandos* from Eidos. What a joy it is to see an un-hyped, no tie-in kind of game like this enjoying the accolades it so rightly deserves. *C&C* has also returned with a bit of a bang – with two incarnations floating around mid-table. Has the end of the summer left you all with a taste for war? Who knows?

Weirdest of all is the movement of last month's surprise re-entries: *GTA* and *Dungeon Keeper* have both actually tiptoed up the charts. Granted they're good games in their own right, but you can't help thinking Virgin Megastore's two-for-one deal is playing a big part.

Keith Pullin

THIS MONTH'S TOP 20

SEP	OCT	TITLE	LABEL	GROUP	WEEKS IN CHART	REVIEW SCORE
2	1	COMMANDOS	EIOOS	EIOOS	12	87%
4	2	PREMIER MANAGER 98	GREMLIN	GREMLIN	9	55%
1	3	X-FILES THE GAME	FOX	EA	6	40%
3	4	WORLO GUP 98	EA SPORTS	EA	16	91%
8	5	TITANIC: ADOVENTURE OUT OF TIME	EUROPRESS	EUROPRESS	13	Not reviewed
-	6	SPEG OPS	TAKE 2	TAKE 2	2	88%
5	7	INTERNATIONAL CRICKET CAPTAIN	EMPIRE	ENTERTAINMENT INT	10	68%
11	8	GHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 97/98	EIOOS	EIOOS	45	90%
-	9	C&C: RED ALERT	VIRGIN	VIRGIN	91	94%
6	10	UNREAL	GT/EPIC	GT	13	93%
12	11	DUNGEON KEEPER	BULLFROG	EA	34	96%
-	12	C&C: COVERT OPS	VIRGIN	VIRGIN	8	84%
14	13	WORMS 2	TEAM 17	MICROPROSE	41	82%
15	14	GRAND THEFT AUTO	OMA	TAKE 2	41	92%
16	15	MIGROSOFT FLIGHT SIM 98	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	50	94%
17	16	STARGRAFT	BLIZZARD	CENOANT	22	88%
18	17	QUAKE II	ACTIVISION	ACTIVISION	39	97%
19	18	AGE OF EMPIRES	MICROSOFT	MICROSOFT	46	94%
-	19	CIVILIZATION 2	MICROPROSE	MICROPROSE	127	90%
13	20	ULTIMATE SOGGER MANAGER 98	SIERRA	CENDANT	20	60%

COMPETITION

WIN THE TOP 10!



PC ZONE and Virgin have joined forces to offer you the chance to walk off with all the Top 10 games. Just answer this war-related question:

Q. What was the name of the American General who co-ordinated the Allied invasion of Normandy?

Just answer the above question and send it on a postcard, along with with all the information requested, to the address below

- Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / Email / Job title / Company name / Age if under 18
- Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies
- Are you a current subscriber to PC ZONE?

Send your entry to: PC ZONE Chart Gampo GPGZ911B, Customer Interface, 8radley Pavilions, 8radley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK.
(Glosing date: Wednesday 21 October 1998)

- Terms and conditions: Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. Capiche?
- Previous Chart compo winners are: Steven Annison of Norwich (issue 65) and Nick Barrett of Keighley, West Yorkshire (issue 66). Weeners are: anybody who didn't enter.

(compiled by Chart Track © ELSA 1998)



THE BUZZ ON THE STREETS

"Hurrah for *Commandos*. See ya, *X-Files*!"

Eric Barton, Leicester

"Seems like there's a bit of a lull at the moment. Even *Commandos* is a bit dull, really..."

Phil Lampe, Gillingham

"I bought *Dungeon Keeper* and it's better than anything else in the charts. It'll go back to Number One!"

Lucas Thorton, North London

"Even at number three, *The X-Files* is still taking the piss."

The 8ug, Exeter

"If England hadn't won a test match, how well would *International Cricket Captain* be doing?"

8ill Flinn, Tumbidge Wells

RETRO CHARTS

1 YEAR AGO...

- Dungeon Keeper* EA
- Constructor* Acclaim
- Little Big Adventure 2* Electronic Arts
- Dark Colony* Take 2
- C&C: Red Alert* Virgin

2 YEARS AGO...

- Quake* GT/ID
- F1GP2* MicroProse
- Z* Warner Interactive
- Theme Park* EA
- Championship Manager 2* Eidos

5 YEARS AGO...

- The 7th Guest* Virgin
- Dune* Virgin
- Day Of The Tentacle* US Gold
- King's Quest V* Sierra
- Eye Of The Beholder* US Gold



Viper Racing has something to offer every petrol head.

SNAKE RACING

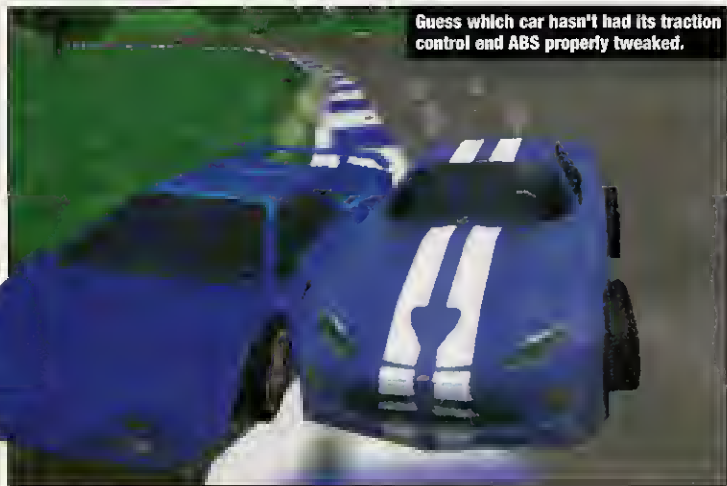
Papyrus spin-off MGI show off Viper Racing

★ IN THE PITS Phil Wand

Some see the Dodge Viper as the epitome of America, whereas others look upon it as one of the world's most accomplished racing cars. Either way, MGI's new Viper Racing sim, due in October from Sierra Sports, looks as though it has something to offer every petrol head on the planet.

An elaborate physics model captures the handling characteristics of real-life Vipers, and every car's suspension is fully animated, showing the vehicle yawing and rolling over dips and bumps in the road.

The pulling power of the game is bolstered with neat features such as a manual clutch, individual ABS and traction control settings, together with customised paint jobs.



Guess which car hasn't had its traction control and ABS properly tweaked.

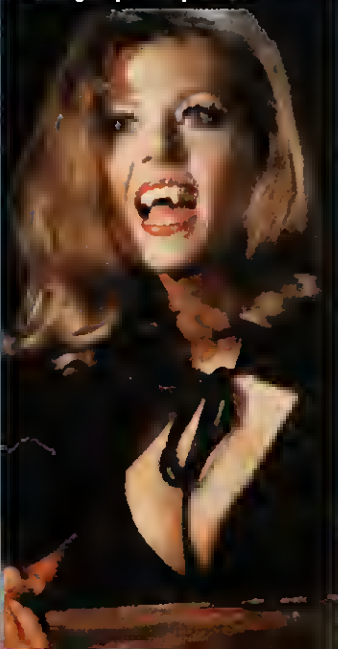
BLOOD-SUCKING FREAKS

White Wolf plan a 3D vampire RPG

Activision have acquired the rights to White Wolf's Vampire role-playing universe. Nihilistic Software are to develop a 3D RPG based on Vampire: The Masquerade, the first episode of the World of Darkness series. With an army of RPGs set to invade the market (see '50 Most Wanted' feature, PCZ #66), Vampire's major selling point looks to be the storyline, in which you, as one of the Kindred, move through time among the living, 'masking' your true nature and fighting your bloodlust while striving to unite disparate vampire clans against the evil Sabbat. Yes, it all sounds a bit sinister, doesn't it?

Activision have yet to show anything of the game, which is not surprising considering it's not due out until November next year.

Meet Ginger Spice's replacement.



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He will learn to talk. Feel pain. Be excited.
Suffer illness. Grow to adulthood.
Perhaps fall in love and have babies.
But for now he needs constant love and attention.

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They'll make you laugh.
They'll make you cry.
They'll make you think.



Smarter Norms make the interactions between Creature and user more fun.

New applications such as the Neuroscience Kit and Object Injector Kit enhance the Creatures 2 experience.



90%



5/6



9/10

www.creatures2.com

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KUNG FU FIGHTING

If chucking shuriken and swinging nunchaka is your idea of fun, Tigon's *Saboteur* could well be a dream come true

★ KARATE MASTER Keith Pullin



Saboteur: Like a big-budget Jackie Chan movie.

Scheduled for spring '99, *Saboteur* is a third-person perspective action game involving "combat, puzzle-solving and exploration". Oh yeah? Furthermore, according to the lacklustre press release, it "adds its own unique elements to create a new edge among third-person perspective games". Which begs the question, what 'unique elements' are these?

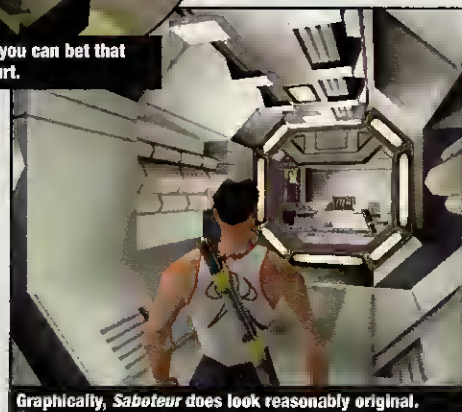
Well, apparently there are over 30 characters, which is commendable but hardly unique, and the plot is allegedly as good as a Hollywood movie. However, something tells us that's not necessarily a good thing.

Maybe this mystery element is something to do with the original *Saboteur* game on the Spectrum; we reckon they're going to port the whole thing over, add a bit of motion-captured animation, and let the 3Dfx card do the rest. Well, probably not, actually, but what else are we supposed to think?



Oooh, you can bet that one hurt.

How much is that doggie in the window? *Thwack!*



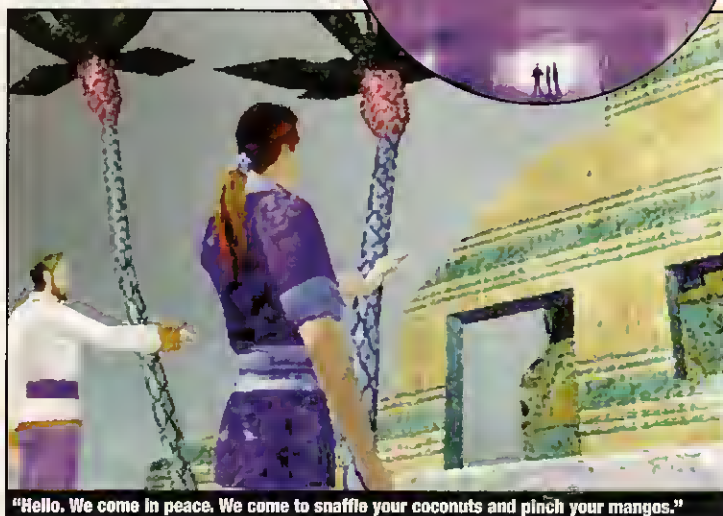
Graphically, *Saboteur* does look reasonably original.

CAVEDOG WORKING ON RPG

Elysium is the strangely named 'dream world' in which developers Cavedog have set this forthcoming title. Ambitiously, they are attempting to combine a third-person perspective, a party-based adventure setting and an RPG environment to produce a unique (if not bizarre) overall experience.

The design team are working on creating an evolving storyline, which you play out through the perspective of up to nine different characters, each of which enjoys a unique role in the unfolding drama. Planned sequels will expand *Elysium* and develop the characters further. If it can overcome the linear structure inherent in most adventure games, then *Elysium* could be a surprise hit for GT Interactive just in time for Christmas '99. More info from www.cavedog.com.

Jimi Hendrix obviously had a hand in this.



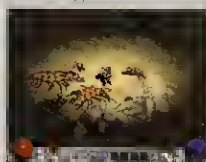
"Hello. We come in peace. We come to snaffle your coconuts and pinch your mangos."

SHORTS

DIABLO II 3Dfx ONLY



Blizzard Entertainment have announced that *Diablo II*, sequel to the top-selling role-playing game of 1997, will require a 3Dfx card to run. Blizzard recently committed themselves to the 3D revolution by signing a deal which commits them to native Glide 3 support.



Freespace EXPANDS

Interplay have announced a new add-on pack for the truly fabulous *FreeSpace - The Great War*. *FreeSpace: Silent Threat* offers 60 new missions designed by Volition and Interplay. It also contains two new playable ships, two new primary weapons, two new secondary weapons and a new enemy capital ship to go up against. The game should be out this autumn.

BLUFFERS Guide to...

VOLUME PIXELS

★ What are they?

A volume pixel, or 'voxel', is an electronic approximation of 3D space. In just the same way that a pixel has a fixed width, a voxel has a fixed width, length and depth.

★ Who created it?

Back in late 1996, computer games developer NovaLogic was awarded a patent for its Voxel Space technology, described as "a technique and system for the real-time generation of perspective images". Voxel Space had originally made its debut way back in 1992 with the hugely successful *Comanche Maximum Overkill*, and can now be seen in places like the medical industry.

★ How are they generated?

Voxels are calculated in two dimensions. Flat squares are generated much faster than polygons, and only one point is required to keep track of their exact position. To give the impression of depth, voxel cubes have graduated shading applied to their surface. For texture, plasmas and sections from the Mandelbrot fractal set are used.

★ Where can I find out more?

The best place to go is www.novalogic.com.



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games, you
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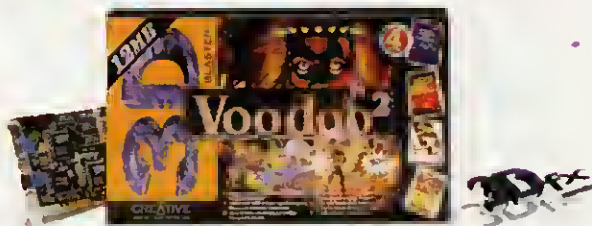
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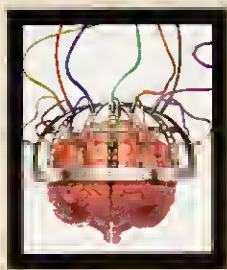
Sound Cards

Graphics Cards

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Video



TECH HEAD

The Sound Blaster Live! – more features than a copy of *Reader's Digest*

★ WORDS Warren Christmas

CREATIVE TARGETS 'POWER GAMERS'

Audio giants unveil their new card... at a price

Creative Labs, the company behind the standard-setting, multimillion-selling Sound Blaster range of sound cards, have finally launched their long-anticipated PCI-based 3D audio accelerator.

The Sound Blaster Live!, which begins shipping in Europe at the beginning of September with a street price of around £150, is the very first sound card to deliver what Creative are calling Environmental Audio, offering "Hollywood-quality" sound performance and advanced special effects. According to the company, it is aimed at "audio enthusiasts, power gamers and PC enthusiasts who need 3D audio acceleration with superior quality effects".

BUMP UP THE VOLUME

The board is based around the EMU10K1 processor from Creative subsidiary E-mu Systems, which is capable of processing effects such as reverb, chorusing and pitch-shifting in real time, offering, it is claimed, the equivalent of having a 90MHz Pentium processor dedicated to audio work. You can use presets or customise settings to simulate acoustic environments such as a hall, theatre or club from any sound source, with output to two or

four analog speakers or up to eight digital speakers. The board also features digital S/PDIF input and output sockets and MIDI ports for musos.

The Live! offers full hardware acceleration of Microsoft's DirectX components DirectSound and DirectSound3D, as well as Environmental Audio Extensions (EAX), Creative's own DirectX extension which already has the backing of a number of key game developers including Electronic Arts, Activision and Eidos. The software which is supplied with the board includes a Special Edition (read: cut-down version) of *Unreal*, as well as Cubase AV, Sonic Foundry Sound Forge XP 4.0 and various other utilities.

A 'Value' version of the Sound Blaster Live!, which comes without some of the advanced features found in the full version, is expected to be launched shortly to compete against cheaper PCI-based accelerators from the likes of Orchid, Diamond and VideoLogic (see our sound card roundup in PCZ #64).

★ Watch out for a full review in next month's PC ZONE, on sale Wednesday 21 October.

★ For more information visit Creative's dedicated Sound Blaster Live! website at www.sblive.com/. Creative Labs: 01189 344322.

FACTCANNON

★ Videologic have announced that their PowerVR Second Generation-based 2D/3D graphics accelerators now won't be available until November at the earliest. The boards, which share technology with the new Sega Dreamcast, were originally expected to be launched in the summer. VideoLogic told us that "90 per cent of the reason for the delay has been caused by producing a [new] cost-optimised version".

★ Logitech, the company best known for their range of mouse controllers, have joined the ever-growing list of manufacturers gearing up to launch a force-feedback steering wheel and pedal set. The WingMan Formula Force, which uses I-Force technology, will be available at the end of November for around £107. A version without force-feedback, the WingMan Formula, will cost around £60. We'll be taking a look at both in a comprehensive steering wheel round-up, now scheduled for PCZ #71.



➔ The WingMan Formula Force: odd name, nice colour.

★ Pace have released a V.90 upgrade for their 56K range of modems (see modem round-up, PCZ #67) as planned, and we're happy to reiterate our recommendation for the 56 Voice External and Internal models (awarded 90% and 88% respectively). The firmware upgrade is available from www.pacecom.co.uk/. Meanwhile, Hayes have a V.90 upgrade for their Accura 56K (81%) at www.hayes.co.uk/. As previously reported, most modems sold after October should be V.90-enabled straight out of the box.

FIRST LOOK

CHIPS AND EVERYTHING

AMD K6-2 (3D GRAPHICS ACCELERATOR CHIP)

★ 266MHz £94; 300MHz £101; 333MHz £165 • AMD • 01276 803100 • www.amd.com

It all seemed great for a while. With a 3Dfx card and a little more memory, the PC you bought two years ago could still cut the mustard with the latest 3D games. Then *Unreal* came along and spoiled it all. Without a top CPU pumping polygons, the games that we're previewing now could end up looking like a jerk-fest.

That's where AMD's K6-2 processor comes in. Thanks to a new technology called 3D Now!, the K6-2 is the first processor that actually accelerates 3D. You're still going to need a decent 3D graphics card, as 3D Now! only speeds up the

front end of the 3D process (the geometry set-up), and not the fancy texture-fill and lighting operations, but it does a great job. In its current varieties – running at 266MHz, 300MHz and 333MHz – it's as fast as Intel's Pentium II processors of the same speeds. If a game supports 3D Now!, you can expect something a little bit quicker.

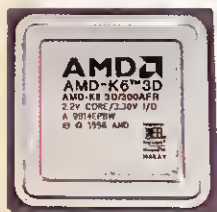
And the good news is that the software industry is backing the technology. There's a *Quake II* patch available, for example, which offers a pretty respectable boost in your frame rate (by up to 18fps on a 333MHz K6-2 with 64Mb of RAM). Also, Microsoft's DirectX 6 has 3D Now! support built in. As a result, any game running under Direct 3D will be accelerated without you having to know anything about it.

While Pentium II processors utilise Intel's proprietary Slot1, the K6-2 use an old Pentium-style Socket 7. But you can't directly replace an old Pentium CPU, as the K6-2 needs a dual voltage-capable motherboard that can run at bus speeds higher than 66MHz. Buy a new mobo and you may also need to replace your old ED0 SIMMs with SDRAM DIMMs.

With all that fuss, keen upgraders may think that they might as well just follow the Intel Pentium II route. However, trying K6-2 does turn out cheaper. The new-style Socket 7 motherboards typically cost less than the Slot1 equivalents, while the K6-2 chips themselves are something of a bargain, with the 300MHz version available for around £100.

So if you're upgrading or buying a new system, it's really worth taking a look. Intel have already had enough of our money, at any rate.

Stuart Andrews



➔ The AMD K6-2 – not much to look at but a decent alternative to Intel's range

PCZVERDICT

85%

HMV

the story so far...



HMV Exclusive

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ONLINEZONE

NOW PLAYING

Don't miss out on the finest Net games

Entertainment on the Internet doesn't have to mean staying up late with a box of Kleenex

★ NET-HEAD Phil Wand

Welcome, modem addicts. This month we're taking a quick peep at three Web games that have a distinct Hollywood tang to them.

First up is *Starship Troopers: Battlespace* hosted in the Action and Strategy section of www.gamestorm.com. Although the film was frustrating in that it lacked a coherent plot, it was still a major blast. And Gamestorm have tried to build on that. They've introduced an important twist by enabling you to play either as American marines or as Bugs (the former gives you the chance to destroy sentient life forms, the latter sees you killing thousands of invertebrate halfwits hell-bent on galactic domination). Whichever side you opt for, you get a choice of some serious weaponry – nukes for the marines and electric snot for the Bugs – and some attractive

DirectDraw graphics. Note that the game is listed in Beta Call, so check the relevant updates and you may be able to fly it for free.

A quick stomp over to *Godzilla Online* at www.godzillaonline.com reveals another



Starship Troopers: crap film, half-decent Web game.

multiplayer death-fest that looks as though it could be more entertaining than the film. Developed in collaboration with

the movie's producer and co-writer, it's a real-time action 'thing' set in various New York locations such as Manhattan and Madison Square Garden. The game features team play, head-to-head battling, together with persistent characters and 3D terrain.

Last for this month is *Aliens Online* at www.aliensonline.com. Like *Starship Troopers: Battlespace*, you're able to side with good or evil – choose between a marine or a fearsome alien slaying machine (no prizes for guessing which is the more popular). If you opt for the bad guys, you start out as a cute little face-hugger. Find yourself a marine to impregnate and then advance through the ranks to become Queen. But the less said about that the better.



Ⓜ This is French air space, so 80-resistant gas masks at the ready.

DAWN OF ACES www.imagiconline.com

From the award-winning team that brought you *WarBirds* comes *Dawn Of Aces*, a MEGAPlayer game that enables up to 300 pilots from all over the world to battle it out in historic aircraft. The flight arenas are based on France, and you're given the choice of two teams – Allies or Central Powers. Each side has an allotment of planes, which at the moment includes the Albatross V, Bristol F2B, Fokker Dr.1, Spad VII, Halberstadt C.II and the inimitable Sopwith Camel. New players fly free for the first five hours.



The Realm and its characters have a lively Disney feel.

THE REALM <http://realmserver.com>

Originally created in 1995, Sierra's *The Realm* has evolved and grown and is now running version 3.0. Hundreds of players are online at any given moment, and numerous chat channels keep the community spirit alive. Latest developments in the software include important revisions to the combat and magic system – you no longer have to rely on fighting to generate income, and can instead choose an occupation. The game world has also expanded, and now incorporates 12 entire towns, each in its own country.

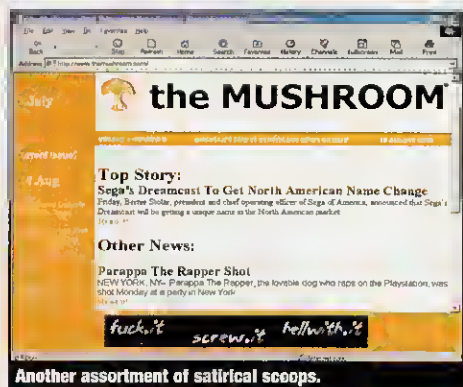


Why buy when you can beta for free? Leave your dish at home and saunter to the following sites

★ Gamestorm is a monster online gaming service that incorporates titles like *Air Warrior*, *Aliens Online*, *Godzilla Online*, *MultiPlayer BattleTech*, *Jack Nicklaus Online Golf Tour* and *Starship Troopers: Battlespace*.
Website: www.kesmai.com/closed_beta/
Email: help@gamestorm.com

★ PlayLink are looking for 2000 beta testers for their new game browser software. All final-release titles will be free for download from the PlayLink site.
Website: <http://beta.playlink.com/>
Email: info@playlink.com

SPESH SITE OF THE MONTH



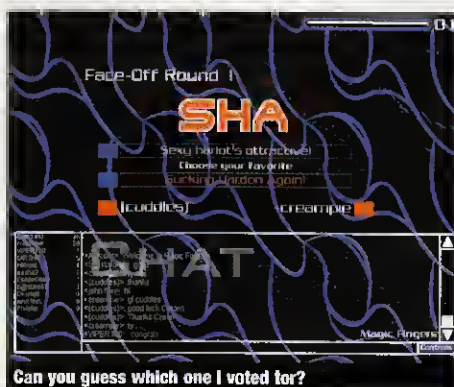
Another assortment of satirical scoops.

THE MUSHROOM

www.themushroom.com

The Mushroom is a satirical online newspaper aimed at the games industry. While it's neither as incisive nor as discerning as *Private Eye*, it still provides a wacky view of the gaming world. Last issue's headlines included an exclusive interview with a certain Italian plumber called Mario, and a scoop on Diamond Multimedia's accusation that Creative Labs aren't creative at all ("We announce a 3Dfx card, they announce a 3Dfx card. We announce a Voodoo2, they announce a Voodoo2. We announce a 56K modem, they announce a 56K modem"). Definitely worth checking out for a giggle.

FREE ONLINE GAME OF THE MONTH



Can you guess which one I voted for?

ACROPHOBIA

www.bezerk.com/acro

Acrophobia (the fear of acronyms) is a Windows-based online game requiring you to form a phrase from a random acronym. For example, you might be given 'BALP'; your answer could be 'Bovines Always Liquidate Plops' – er, you get the idea. What happens next is that all the answers are collated by the software (a 2Mb download, though you only need to grab it once), and everyone in the game gets to vote on the best one. Points are awarded to the winner. It's great fun, although the only criticism is that the game's authors don't seem to know what an acronym actually is.



Here's God, taking a piss on our newly-built settlement. Yeah - cheers, God.

CATCH SOME RAYS

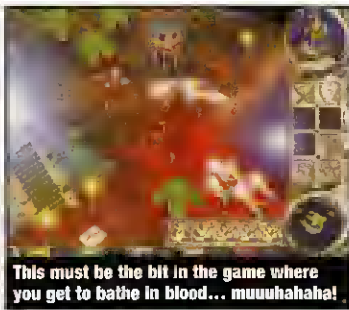
Get your hands on this little ray of sunshine this winter

WORDS Steve Hill

Those sim-tastic guys at Creative Edge are churning games out at a pace, and currently looking quite promising is *Solar*, due to be published by Ubi Soft. The action takes place in a faraway land populated by tribes who bow to the all-pervasive power of the Solar God. Beginning with a primitive race, you are charged with the task of moulding your people into an all-conquering army. In the messed-up world of *Solar*, both men and women play an integral role, and each have their own characteristics that can prove vital to your survival. Check it out in November.



Where would a game with a name like *Solar* get without fancy lighting effects?



This must be the bit in the game where you get to bathe in blood... muuuuhahaha!

KANED AGAIN

Legacy Of Kain: Soul Reaver is a far cry from the previous *Legacy Of Kain* adventure. For starters, those titchy, overhead, 2D graphics have now been replaced by much beefier 3D affairs. Our vampire hero now flaps his way through vast, expansive *Quake*-like caverns, and fights impressive, texture-mapped polygonal monsters (instead of silly sprites).

An innovative hand-to-hand combat system is currently being implemented, although *Soul Reaver* will not let fisticuffs get in the way of a good adventure. Expect lots of dark, gothic, bloodsucking fun in December when Eidos publish the game over here.



Where did all the titchy sprites go? *Legacy Of Kain* at last grows up.

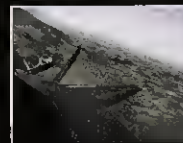


These men know all there is to know about air war strategy. They helped create this game.



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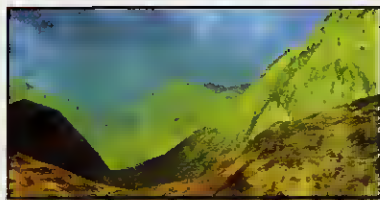


We have the inspiration for three movies, and has been seen by over 32 million cinema-goers around the world.

WILL IT EVER END

If you're old enough to remember Limahl's whining rendition of the theme tune to *The Neverending Story*, you're too old to be playing games

★ WORDS Paul Rose



Check out Discreet Monsters' new 3D engine.

The film, based upon the books by Michael Ende, followed the adventures of a young boy, Sebastian, sucked into a fantasy world. For the game, due out next Easter from German developers Discreet Monsters, you fill Sebastian's Dunlop pumps.

Talk of the 3D action-adventure being the best game of next year isn't uncommon. An insider for Microsoft was heard to remark: "This could be a potential killer app." And on the strength of the screens we've seen, the anonymous bugger could be right. Cool!



Our dauntless hero Atreyu (front) has obviously got lots to smile about.

BUILDING GAMES WITH LEGO

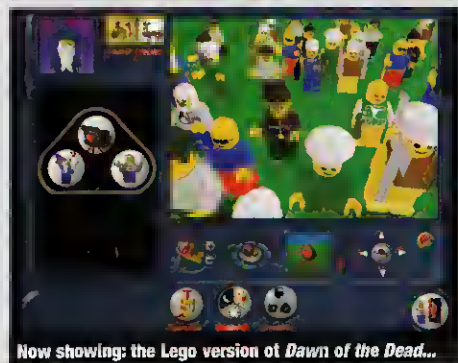
Lego Media International showed their new Lego creation utility, *Lego Creator*, and a new racing game called *Lego Racers* at the recent ECTS show. While they may not be as sophisticated – graphically at least – as some of the other titles on display at the event, both proved original enough to catch our eye at the time.

Based on Lego's much loved Constructive range of bricks, *Lego Creator* will enable anyone of any age to build their own cities, vehicles, situations and puzzles in

full 3D. And once they're built you can then drive and fly your way through them from a variety of different viewpoints.

Lego Racers, being developed by US-based High Voltage Software, will feature 12 System Lego tracks and a fleet of fully customisable Lego cars.

★ *Lego Creator* is due out on Wednesday 11 November priced £39.99; *Lego Racers* is not due until spring next year.



Now showing: the Lego version of Dawn of the Dead...



Lego Creator is based on real Lego brick sets.

A BARRAGE FROM ACTIVISION

By 2002, 78% of all software sold in Europe will be on DVD-ROM format

Barrage, until recently trapped in 'development hell', has finally been snapped up by 3D specialists Activision

Barrage, which featured on our June cover disc, is a 3D accelerator-only arcade blast 'em up blessed with gorgeous visuals and a no-frills plot. In the full game you get to negotiate five real-time 3D environments in a hover-type combat plane armed to the teeth with the latest military hardware. Fighting against the clock and assorted enemy targets, your goal is to blast through each stage then discover the exit (Mensa membership not required). Controls are simplistic, ammunition unlimited, and it all looks like being wonderfully explosive, mindless fun. Activision are hoping that developers Mango Grits wrap it up in time for a Christmas release so they can release it at a festively competitive price.

★ For the latest information check out www.mangogrits.com



In *Barrage*, the whole game is a race against time.

YOUR MOST WANTED

A look at the games you most want to see over the next few months, and when they're expected

- 1 Duke Nukem 4 Ever (GT) – November '98
- 2 Half-Life (Cendant) – September '98
- 3 Quake III/Arena (Activision) – spring '99
- 4 Carmageddon II (SCI) – September '98
- 5 SIN (Activision) – September '98
- 6 Commandos 2 (Eidos) – Spring '99
- 7 Championship Manager 3 (Eidos) – October '98
- 8 C&C Tiberian Sun (Westwood) – October '98
- 9 Grim Fandango (LucasArts) – September '98
- 10 Aliens Versus Predator (Fox) – November '98

We want to hear how you'd vote – email us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject line 'Most Wanted'.

PLAYSTATION ZONE

How many PlayStations does it take to change a lightbulb? None. They can't change lightbulbs, silly

★ **BUTTON BASHER** Paul Mallinson

THE BIG GAME: PAC MAN 3D

Histoire: Never heard of *Pac Man*? Where have you been for the last ten years? Small yellow sphere with a penchant for popping pills. First saw the light of day in the arcades way back in 1983.

Smells like: *Pandemonium*, *Gex*, *Enter The Gecko*, *Mario 64*, and *Pac Man*, of course.

Storyline: Heh. Run around avoiding ghosts, eating pills and floating fruit. Probably something to do with an evil animal bad guy taking over the world. In other words, neither know nor care.

Big deal: *Pac Man* is Namco's big mascot, so they'll want to get it right. A 3D *Pac Man* game has been on the cards for a while, and anticipation is high. Oh, and the original 2D game is being included somewhere in there too.

Low point: Could end up being a little bit too simplistic for some tastes. The proof of the pudding will definitely be in the eating.

Tech stuff: Namco are working

long and hard on the control system, so that *Pac Man* can fly, swim, 'rocket' (whatever that is) and chomp his way around the vast 3D landscape with ease. With your assistance, of course.

Our impression: As long as they keep the distinctive sound effects (waka-waka-waka...) and the sweat-inducing gameplay, this should be something of a winnah.



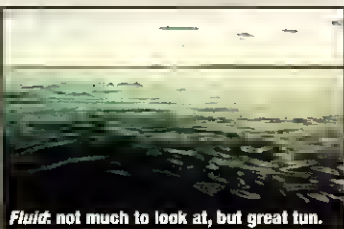
It's *Pac Man*. And it's 3D. Will this guarantee a great game?

TWO TO WATCH



Test Drive 5 will be PlayStation only.

TEST DRIVE 5 (Accolade/EA)
Accolade's new PlayStation-only *Test Drive* title, now in its fifth incarnation, will have 28 licensed cars. "Big deal," we hear you say. But wait, there's more. The inclusion of a new Cop Chase mode and new 'branching technology' (which helps generate shortcuts and alternate pathways 'on the fly') have been included. You're interested now, aren't you?



Fluid: not much to look at, but great fun.

FLUID (Sony)
Going out on something of a gaming limb, Sony's *Fluid* is a strange beast indeed. It isn't a game as such, more a simple ambient/techno music sequencer with an *Ecco the Dolphin*-style front end. *Fluid* has some surprisingly good instruments (good enough for DJ Roger Sanchez to make use of) and will no doubt appeal to stoners everywhere.

YOU WILL SOON
MEET THE
ULTIMATE CHALLENGE...



HUDDERSFIELD

PC ZONE visits the place where old men travel around in baths and *Last Of The Summer Wine* is made

★ ROVING REPORTER Andy Martin



Robert 'Compo' Kaye and Paul 'Clegg' Doyle propping up the counter 'down the shop'.

LAND OF THE BRAVE

Paul Doyle is deputy manager of Huddersfield's only town-centre PC retailer, Electronics Boutique. Opened three years ago, it harbours a relatively small stock of PC hardware. Paul explains: "The market's definitely console-led in Huddersfield; our only particular competition as far as the PC goes is MVC in the centre. Their stock is minimal though; it's music they lean towards. Then there's PC World, but they're out of town, so we have no 'real' competition."

Does Paul own a PC?

"N64."

Would Paul like to own a PC?

"Yes."

Is Paul thinking of buying a PC?

"All the time."

From PC World?

"No."

Enter Robert Andrew Kaye, sales



assistant and owner of a P166: "It does what I need," he says.

Robert agrees about the low demand for PC games. "Unreal is doing real well, *The Sentinel Returns* isn't. Footie games are fairly popular, but the biggest surprise must be *International Cricket Captain*. That's sold bucket loads (ie six copies); unlike *Windows 98*, which hasn't."

Christmas predictions?

"*FIFA '99*, of course. *Tiberian Sun*, *Daikatana*... There are too many to mention."

WHO LIVES IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?



LIBBY BROWN
19, theatre studies student

What are you in here for?

"I'm on an errand for someone to pick up a copy of *The X-Files*."

Surely not?

"I'm afraid so. The boy's clearly an idiot."

So you wouldn't recommend it, then?

"Not at all. I mean, it's *The X-Files*, isn't it? And *The X-Files* is bum gravy."

What would you consider, then?

"*Grim Fandango* and that's it. I adored *Day Of The Tentacle* and *Sam & Max*, so LucasArts can have my money."

IN THE NAVY

You can sail the seven seas. Or don a black balacava with a knife clenched between your teeth

Navy Seals, from Yosemite Ent. and Sierra, is a 3D squad-based strategy title based upon real SEAL operations and weaponry. You are given full access to a goody bag of underwater delivery vehicles, surface approach rafts, desert patrol jeeps, Heckler & Koch sub-machine guns and extra-large Stars & Stripes arm patches.

Due late '99, the game is mission-based, enabling complete customisation of teams, equipment and camouflage gear for each outing. You decide how missions proceed, whether via parachute, underwater or overland. You can control multiple SEALs, and the scenarios are rendered in full 3D from different camera viewpoints.



Still a long way off: Yosemite's *Navy Seals* already looks quite promising, dunnit?

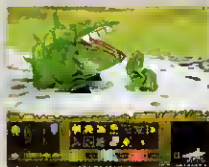
SHORTS

READY TO RUMBLE

Following the frankly bizarre *Vangers*, erstwhile simulation specialists Interactive Magic are diversifying further with the acquisition of two titles from German-based developers Topware. *RoboRumble* is a real-time strategy affair entailing building robots and having them tear each other apart, whereas *Knights & Merchants* looks more promising, involving resource management and combat in a medieval style. With serfs and everything.

DOMINATION STREET

Take 2 Interactive are tossing their hat into the real-time strategy ring with *Dominant Species*, a 3D 360-degree



affair developed by Red Storm Entertainment. As a powerful alien intelligence, you are engaged in constant conflict over the possession of Anima, the precious substance that sustains alien life. However, human intervention causes untold problems and it all kicks off. Due October.

"IF I HAD £150"



Got 150 smackers and nothing decent to spend it on? Why not try out PC ZONE's guide to alternative gaming?

★ Ooooh, it's *Carmageddon II* time again (see page 86 – as if you haven't checked it out already).

The moral majority will have something worthwhile to do with their spare time now. Like slitting their own throats and doing us right-minded people a favour, right? Anyway, after much deliberation in the office (and midnight phone calls to the 24-hour Tesco's round the corner) we've decided that if we were rich enough to have £150 stowed away, we'd spend it wisely. Oh yes, very wisely indeed. We'd start off with *Carmageddon II*, as we were saying (£39.99, all good PC game shops). To add to the overall effect we'd splash out on an F1 5im Compact steering wheel (£79.99, Virgin Megastore). But for the full-on immersive experience, you'd need a bit more than just a steering wheel. For that final touch, we'd rush out and buy a couple of pounds of pig's liver (£7, Dewhurst), a 'party-sized' bottle of Heinz Tomato Ketchup (£3.99, Tesco) and a pound of rough-cut beef mince (£4.39, Safeway, on special offer). We'd then trot off down to our local abattoir and demand £15 worth of offal (we're sure they get requests like that every day). Then we'd bring it all back to the ZONE office, chuck the lot over our office PC, and then sit back and load up *Carmageddon II* for the ride of our lives. Of course, we'd all be collecting our P45s the next day. But hey, it would have been worth it.

MUSIC WRITTEN BY
RICHARD WAGNER

CONDUCTED BY
SIR GEORG SOLTI

FEATURING THE VOICE OF
CHARLOTTE RAMPLING

3D SETS DESIGNED BY
DRUILLET



RING

BRING THE LEGEND TO LIFE

EXPERIENCE THE WORLD'S FIRST SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE GAME BASED DIRECTLY ON THE EPIC STORY OF ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST OPERAS, THE RING OF NIBELUNGEN, BY RICHARD WAGNER. A HUMOROUS AND THRILLING SAGA FEATURING MULTI-ROLE NON-LINEAR GAMEPLAY WITH 22 CHARACTERS, COMPELLING DIALOGUE AND A BACKGROUND SOUNDTRACK OF THE GREATEST RECORDING OF ALL TIME OF WAGNER'S THE RING OF NIBELUNGEN WITH THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA CONDUCTED BY THE LATE GEORG SOLTI.

THE VOICE OF CHARLOTTE RAMPLING FEATURES AS THAT OF 'MOTHER EARTH' IN THIS MYTHOLOGY DESIGNED BY DRUILLET, THE CREATOR OF DARTH VADER.

A **CRYO** PRODUCTION

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Visit our website on www.cryo-interactive.com



The Man who KNOWS

ECTS misery soars

Grown men telling lies about kids' games. Yes, the annual despairathon that is the **European Computer Trade Show** threw up its traditional mix of sweaty armpits, moist handshakes, and bullshit levels matched only by the ear-splitting volume in the gargantuan hall. West London's Kensington Olympia again provided the venue this September, and whatever figures the organisers are claiming, they are clearly a nonsense, with each attendee's badge checked on numerous occasions. Dignity was also checked in at the door, with adults paid to portray characters from computer games, which is possibly as low as anyone can sink (apart from wanking for coins). The obligatory heavy-breasted models adorned the stands, providing countless photo opportunities for frustrated staff writers and retailers who, having queued keenly for a tawdry Polaroid, always looked slightly ashamed when it came to the crunch, as if suddenly aware of the enormity of their actions.

As for celebrity appearances, **Eidos** stole a march on their rivals on the very first morning, parading **Michael Owen** less than 24 hours after England's disappointing defeat in Sweden. The press conference was a somewhat chaotic affair, comprising an unlikely combination of hard-nosed tabloid hacks and pasty-faced games 'journalists'. The young star was subjected to a media scrum, interrogated about England's performance while employees of Eidos attempted desperately to steer the questioning back towards the 'product'. Owen proved to be of the Alan Shearer school of talking without saying anything, although he did raise a laugh in response to a tenuous **Lara Croft** question, explaining: "She's a legend in computer games, and hopefully I can become as big as her one day." He soon got a chance to see just how big she is, when the latest Lara appeared from nowhere and proceeded to nuzzle the youngster for the benefit of the cameras.

One celebrity not at the show was former gangland villain 'Mad As A Lorry' **Frankie Fraser**, who had been pencilled into to promote crime 'em up **Gangsters**, again for Eidos. The violent criminal was all set to appear, until it was pointed out that using a convicted murderer for commercial gain was not necessarily in the best possible taste. Nevertheless, his withdrawal has already generated plenty of column inches (including these), and largely goes to show what a hateful self-perpetuating business this really is. It's all about marketing, with 'innovative campaigns' taking precedence over developing decent games, and corporate masturbation masking ill-conceived ideas. Stop the madness. Now.

Take on two shamblers at once, and complete the level in under three seconds? You cannot be serious?!

SCOURGE DONE SLICK

What to do when the challenge of single-player *Quake* is just not enough

Turn to *Speed Quake*. The general idea is to get to the exit, kill every monster, explore every room and find every secret in – you guessed it – as quick a time as is humanly possible. In Nightmare mode.

With the release of their second movie, *Scourge Done Slick*, the *Quake Done Quick* group (www.planetquake/qdq) have now completed both *Quake* and Activision's *Scourge Of Armagon* add-on in times so blisteringly fast they make one of the toughest games ever look like child's play. By

utilising some of the 'bugs' in the *Quake* engine, it's been possible for them to accomplish tricks that iD never even knew about. "While running along a corridor, strafe into one of the walls," says QDQ's Anthony Bailey. "Doing this can increase your speed by up to 40 per cent." Couple this with the infamous 'rocket jump' technique, and levels can be completed in, quite literally, seconds.

★ Check out the Editorial section on this month's CD-ROM for both movies – see page 164.



From the people who brought you Ubi Soft's *Baldies: Skullcaps*.

ALOPECIA ÜBER ALLES

Real dullards may remember news of a game called *Baldies*, which was touted by Gametek over three years ago. A resource management-cum-strategy affair, it looked plop and was subsequently cancelled due to lack of interest. The game has refused to die though, and has now re-emerged under the name *Skullcaps*, with Ubi Soft taking the publishing reins. Developed by Creative Edge, it follows the adventures of the Skullies (formerly Baldies), and still looks plop. Due in September.

TICKER TAPE

STARTS++ Stainless Software's next project will be an ultra-gory beat 'em up that promises to be even more shocking than *Carnageddon II* (if that's at all possible). Look out for more details soon **++STOP++** High-eyebrowed French publishing outfit Titus have bought Digital Integration and will be publishing *F/A-18E Super Hornet* under the DI brand before Christmas **++STOP++** Red Storm Entertainment, the folks behind the mucho decent *Rainbox Six* (see page 94), have signed a deal with best-selling science fiction/fantasy author Anne McCaffrey. The deal will see them produce a game based on her popular Catteni series, currently due before the end of 1999 **++STOP++** Elixir Studios (recently founded by Theme Park creator Demis Hassabis) have signed a publishing deal with Eidos Interactive **++STOP++** Rumour has it that Take 2 have canned Ripcord's *Space Bunnies Must Die* **++STOP++** Codemasters have signed up boxing superstar Prince Naseem for a new game to be out early in 1999 **++ENDS**

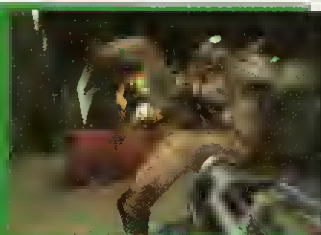
**Your brain is 10
times faster than
a tennis ball.**

**A computer is
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how fast are you actua ?

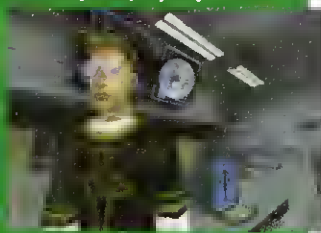
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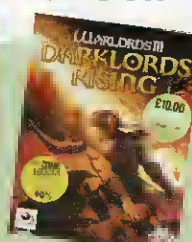
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...and a crime not to get the
best out of them



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HOTLINE

Unless something's gone horribly wrong with the weather, you should be freezing your parts off right about now. What better way to spend these autumnal nights than with the **PC ZONE Hotline**?

FRI 2ND

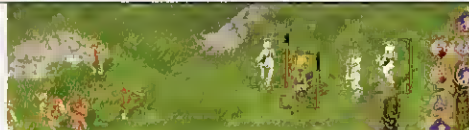
Games released today include...

Jimmy White's 2: Cueball (Virgin Interactive) – By all accounts being the wielder of a snooker cue turns you into an instant fanny



magnet. How else can you explain the tabloid headlines which regularly regale us with tales of yet another hideously freakish professional snooker player involved in an illicit tryst with some young lovely? It's unlikely that purchasing *Jimmy White's 2* will have this effect on your pulling powers, but you never know... (PCZ #68, 88%)

Magic & Mayhem (Virgin)



– Being a member of the school role-playing club is akin to walking around wearing a T-shirt bearing the slogan 'I am impotent and unable to get a girlfriend. Please punch me in the bread-basket and make fun of my glasses

and hopeless bum-fluff moustache'. Virgin's bonafide RPG *Magic & Mayhem* should evoke such memories for many of you. **Quest For Glory 5** (Sierra) – Oh la-di-dah, the King of Silmaria has been assassinated and a new

ruler must be found. Engage in the Seven Rites Of Rulership to see if you're worthy. It's a 3D action-based RPG, apparently. And probably very, very serious. **NFL Blitz** (GT Int) – There's a name for people who like American football, and that name is 'white trash'. It's baffling why anyone would enjoy the sport, save for the fact that it makes them think they're American.

OCTOBER

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

FRI 9TH

Among today's game release are...

Montezuma's Return (Take 2 Interactive) – If you can remember the original *Montezuma's Revenge*, you're too old to be playing games. More than a decade on, this revamp adopts a distinctly *Tomb Raider*-esque stance. **Newman Haas Racing** (Pygnosis) – Pygnosis have set themselves such a high benchmark with



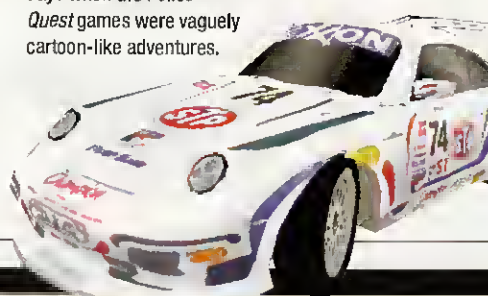
their *Formula One* games that anything else they release has to live up to that or suffer a humiliating debasement.

Screamer SportsCar Racing (Virgin Int.) – Proper arcade-style racing games on the PC are becoming more and more

common. *Screamer* was the original, and here it returns with less of an emphasis on all-out big laffs, and with one foot in the sim paddock.

Police Quest SWAT 2 (Sierra) – Gone are the days when the *Police Quest* games were vaguely cartoon-like adventures.

Now, with the aid of former US police officers ensuring authenticity, they're more like simulations of real police life. Would-be US police officers will be disappointed to discover there's no option here to beat on the 'coloureds'.

THU 15TH

Quakeadefica final – This long-running *Quake* tournament, run by Wireplay, comes to a head today. The final takes place at a central London location, and the finalist will 'go up against' Thresh, the US youth widely regarded as the world's greatest *Quake* player. Amusingly, Thresh's real name is Dennis Fong, by the way. No lie. Tune in to www.quakeadefica.com.

THU 5TH

Bonfire night – Here's a tip for a great bonfire night: buy one of those really big

rockets, tie a bag of raw eggs to it and set it off. The next morning see if you managed to egg the roof of a neighbour's house.

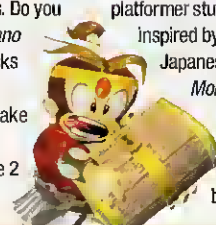
FRI 6TH

Among the games released today are...

North V South (Interactive Magic) – Turn-based American Civil War strategy from the developers of the

Great Battles series. Do you remember that *Beano* comic strip The Jocks And The Geordies? Someone should make a game of that. **Monkey Hero** (Take 2 Interactive) – 3D

platformer stuff allegedly inspired by the classic Japanese TV series *Monkey*. That bald kid from *Monkey*: bird or bloke?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

NOVEMBER

SUN 8TH

Remembrance Sunday – Unfortunately, we've forgotten what it is we're supposed to be remembering.

FRI 13TH

Games released today include...

Wild Metal Country (Gremlin Interactive) – Described to us by an enthusiastic Scotsman as "a bloody exciting tanky action game. Kinda like

Quake in tanks but far more exciting and fun." 'Nuff said.

Blosys (Take 2 Interactive) – Cyborg things do battle. Very probably in the future.



FRI 16TH

Among today's game releases is...

Ultrafighters (Interactive Magic) – With a name like

this it could only be a beat 'em up. But it isn't, it's a futuristic shoot 'em up wherein you take control of a number of fancy spaceship things. Original.

SAT 17TH

Today's games include...

Grand Prix Legends (Sierra) – You see? All it takes is a bit of thought. *Grand Prix Legends* successfully stands out from the crowd because it puts a spin on the racing genre by turning the clock back to the golden age of motor sports. Classic cars, classic tracks, classic drivers and classic racers

– splendid idea.

Rainbow Six (Take 2 Interactive) – Serious strategy adventure put together with the assistance of Mr Political Thrillers himself, Tom Clancy. Whoever the hell he is. (See review on p94.)

F-16 Aggressor (Virgin) – With a name like that this could only be a flight simulator. But it isn't, it's a strip poker game. (No, it's a flight simulator – Ed.)

FRI 30TH

Games released today include...

Glover (Hasbro) – Remember that stupid glove Michael Jackson

used to wear? Ever wondered what happened to it? There's a line of thinking that suggests the glove developed sentience and ran off with a little bouncy ball which it had to

gaining experience as you progress. Hi-tech laser blasters sit alongside magic spells in your arsenal.

Global Domination (Psygnosis) – Described as

part *Risk*, part *Command & Conquer*, this strategy nonsense puts you in charge of the Universal Tactical Response Agency (ULTRA) to prevent the world from descending into chaos in the space year 2016AD. You can take control of bombers, tighters, spy satellites and ground forces to put a stop to the evil World Order Enterprises. As you do.

Brian Lara Cricket (Codemasters) – The only game to feature a Lara without massive jugs.

Mud & Metal (Take 2 Interactive) – Cars, or maybe bikes, racing around some really muddy tracks. At a guess.

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

FRI 23RD

And today's game releases include...

Pro 18: World Tour Golf (Psygnosis) – We laughed and laughed at the comedy names of the characters in *Pro 18*, but then we discovered that Colin Woosnam, Dottie Pepper, Jesper Parnevik and Vijay Singh were actual golfers. Doh! This is the first ever golf game from Psygnosis, but with spot-on recreations of the courses at Royal County Down, Sun

City and Cour de D'Alene, and a commentary by Peter Alliss, this could be great. **Half-Life** (Sierra) – The battle of the next generation of *Quake* clones continues. Sierra's entry is one of the better-looking fillies on the starting line. The plot involving genetic mutations and real-world locations makes us go all funny.

Dark Vengeance (GT Interactive) – GT describe this so-called adventure-cum-strategy game as "beautiful". It may well be,

but didn't Damien Hirst say the same thing about his eviscerated cows and dead sheep?

War Of The Worlds (GT Interactive) – Liverpool's Rage Software are developing this real-time wargame inspired by the dreadful Jeff Wayne rock opera based on the classic HG Wells novel. The Victorian setting, with its cannons and horseback artillery, should provide a refreshing change from the usual 'mining for ore' bollocks.



The Chosen: Blood 2 (GT Interactive) – This sequel should at least improve on the graphics of the original, cos it runs on a modified *Quake II* engine. (See preview on page 64.)

Arcade Classics 2 (GT Interactive) – A load of old games dressed in fancy

new trousers. Sort of. **Unreal Level Editor** (GT Interactive) – This proper release includes a manual, and a whole bunch of features not available in previous incarnations.

Trans-Am Racing (GT Interactive) – Would-be Jack Kerouacs can get their fill of driving from coast to coast across The Big Country in this nice-looking trans-America racer.

Hordes (GT Interactive) – The latest wave of real-

time wargames are trying to be a little different by experimenting with that tiring 'mine for ore' tedium. *Hordes* has a medieval setting, for example, with enemy units taking the form of orcs, goblins and the undead. And yes, there are spells and magic and that.

Knights And Merchants (Interactive Magic) – Currently riding high in Steve Hill's gaming Top 10, because, according to him, "you get to kill pigs". What a charming fellow.

FRI 20TH

Games released today include...

Fallout 2 (Interplay) – More non-linear post-apocalyptic role-playing with a far larger playing

area than last time. Which is good.

Roborumble (Interactive Magic) – More real-time wargaming, though this time it's all fancy and 3D graphics card-accelerated,

and features armies of robots, er, 'rumbling'.

Railroad Tycoon II (Take 2 Interactive) – Establish a railroad network and watch in surprise as civilisation springs up around it. Now's your chance to become a virtual Branson to be reckoned with.

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30

FRI 27TH

Among today's game releases are...

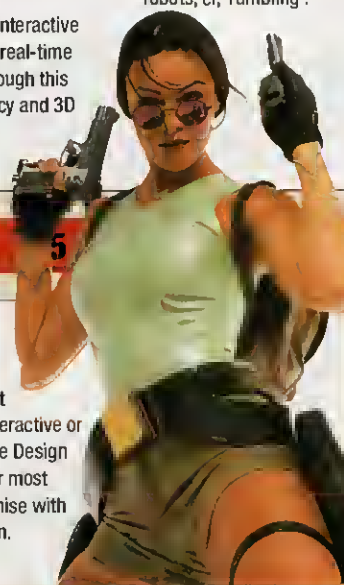
TOCA 2 (Codemasters) – Codemasters are rapidly

proving themselves to be a major force when it comes to racing games, and *TOCA 2* should consolidate the firm's position on the podium.

Tomb Raider III (Eidos Interactive) – With an appearance on *Newsnight*, and the subject of a book

written by cult author Douglas Coupland, Lara Croft is arguably the biggest game character of all time, and *Tomb Raider III* is potentially the biggest game of the year. Some pundits have expressed concern over the rapid turnaround between this

and the last appearance of 'da Croft', but it's unlikely that either Eidos Interactive or developers Core Design would risk their most lucrative franchise with a cheap cash-in. Right?

MON 30TH

St Andrews Day –

Another excuse (not that they need one) for Scottish people to get blind drunk.



PCZONE

READER AWARDS

We all like to back a winner, and here's your chance to do just that. The **PC ZONE** Reader Awards 1998 are the next biggest thing after... the **PC ZONE** Reader Awards 1997. So fill in the coupon, vote on our website or send us your emails, and get the satisfaction of proving to your mates that *Quake II* is definitely better than *Unreal*. Then again, maybe it's the other way around...

“If you have an Internet connection, you can also fill in our interactive voting form on the PC ZONE website at www.pczone.co.uk”

The voting is already well underway since it opened last month: no surprises that a certain pair of first-person shooters are at it neck and neck. But there are some interesting games doing better than we'd expected. If you're into empire building, you may not be surprised. But for the final word, you'll have to wait until the awards are announced in the January 1999 issue of **ZONE**...

DON'T DELAY - DO IT TODAY

If you haven't voted yet, get on with it

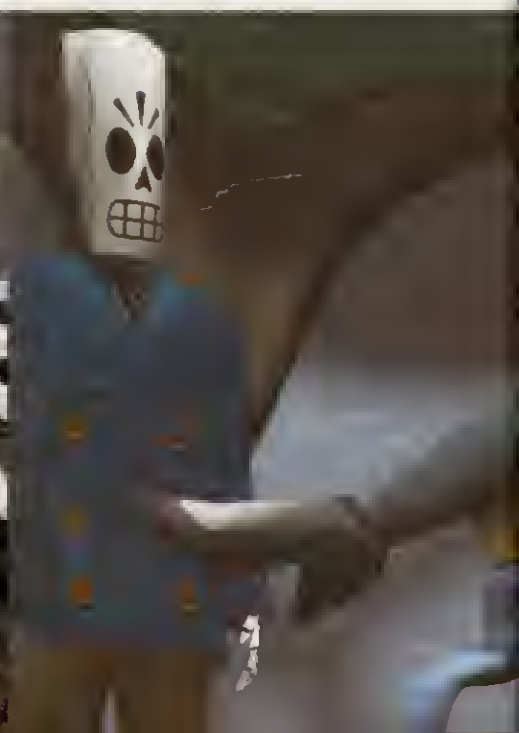
straight away. The voting form will only be in one further issue (December, on sale Wednesday 21 October) so this is your penultimate chance. You've only got to look through your last few issues of **ZONE** to realise there are tons of games to choose from, but they must have been released since September 1997 - so don't bother voting for *C&C: Red Alert*. Instead, how about *Unreal* (PCZ #65, 93%), *Tomb Raider II* (PCZ #57, 94%), *Grand Theft Auto* (PCZ #58, 92%), *Final Fantasy VII* (PCZ #66, 93%), *Jane's F-15* (PCZ #64, 92%), *Monkey Island 3: The Curse Of Monkey*

Island (PCZ #58, 92%), *World Cup 98* (PCZ #65, 91%)... It may prove a harder decision than you thought.

WIN A PRIZE

All voting forms received from this issue will be fed into our least powerful office PC - the rest are reserved for games, not databases - and then entered into a draw to win one of five Videologic SonicStorm audio accelerator cards (see the 'Win' panel on the right).

To help get you started on the voting process and identify which types of games fall into which



category, we've indicated a few of the titles we reckon will come fairly high on your list of 'must-wins' in the category panel. Don't forget: your votes must be for games released since September 1997, and your voting form needs to reach us by Wednesday 11 November 1998.

If you have an Internet connection, you can also fill in our interactive voting form on the PC ZONE website at www.pczone.co.uk. Alternatively, you can email us your votes by writing to paulm.pc@dial.pipex.com with the subject line 'Awards 98'. Remember: if you email your votes you will need to indicate the categories as well as the game names, and give your name, address and daytime telephone number, otherwise your entry cannot be accepted. **PCZ**

★ There will also be four additional special awards presented at the ceremony. Our sponsors, VideoLogic and Wireplay, will both be presenting their own Special Awards. Our sister publication, PC ZONE Benelux, will also have their own award, voted for by their readers. And finally, there will also be a Special PC ZONE Award, voted for internally by the editorial team, because otherwise we'll feel a bit left out.

★ When you send us your vote you will be entered into our competition where you stand a chance to win one of five audio accelerator cards from VideoLogic. What are you waiting for?

SPONSORED BY

VideoLogic



By submitting your vote you will be automatically entered into our competition to win one of five Videologic

SonicStorm audio accelerator cards.

THE CATEGORIES

Here are the voting categories and a reminder of some of our recommendations for 1998

BEST ACTION

Jedi Knight: Mysteries Of The Sith, SiN, Forsaken, Unreal, Quake II

BEST FLIGHT SIM

F-22 ADF, Jane's F-15, Jane's Longbow 2, Comanche 3

BEST DRIVING

Motocross Madness, Grand Theft Auto, Motorhead, Ultim@te Race Pro

BEST ADVENTURE/RPG

Grim Fandango, Starship Titanic, Fallout, Final Fantasy VII, The Curse of Monkey Island, Blade Runner

BEST SPORTS

World Cup 98, NHL 98, Virtual Pool 2, The Golf Pro

BEST PUBLISHER

Eidos, Electronic Arts, Gremlin, Microsoft, Psygnosis, MicroProse

BEST STRATEGY

Age Of Empires, Total Annihilation, M1 Tank Platoon II, The Sentinel Returns, X-COM Interceptor

GAME OF THE YEAR

Final Fantasy VII, Jedi Knight: Mysteries Of The Sith, Age Of Empires, Unreal, Quake II

PCZONE AWARDS 98 VOTING FORM

BEST ACTION GAME	_____
BEST ADVENTURE/RPG GAME	_____
BEST DRIVING GAME	_____
BEST PUZZLE GAME	_____
BEST FLIGHT SIMULATION GAME	_____
BEST SPORTS GAME	_____
BEST STRATEGY GAME	_____
GAME OF THE YEAR	_____
DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR	_____
PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR	_____

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☐ Please tick if under 18 years of age (we need to ask this question so we don't send inappropriate material to minors).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Postal entries with all nominations filled out correctly will be entered into the prize draw and winners will be selected at random after the closing date. The Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into and all winners will be notified by post. This competition is not open to employees of Dennis Publishing or any other companies associated with the Awards. Only one entry per reader. No cash alternatives will be offered. Submission of entry will be taken as acceptance of these rules.

★ **SEND YOUR VOTES TO:** Reader Awards 98 Votes, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. All nominations must reach us by Wednesday 11 November 1998, so get thinking right away. A photocopy or postcard will do if you don't want to cut up your copy of PC ZONE. Remember: you can also register your votes online at www.pczone.co.uk, or by email as detailed above.



HOTSHOTS

In which **PC ZONE** takes an early look at hot new games that will be coming your way soon. This month we've got brand new screenshots from Rage Software's *Expendable* and Ubi Soft's *Regnum: Wrath Of The Fallen*

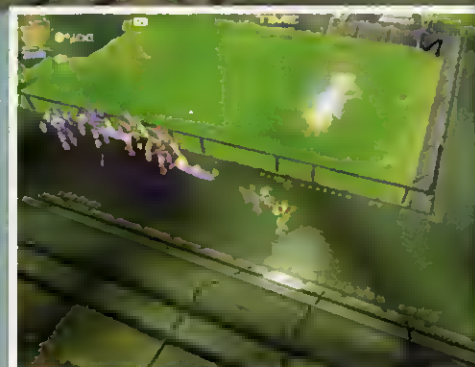
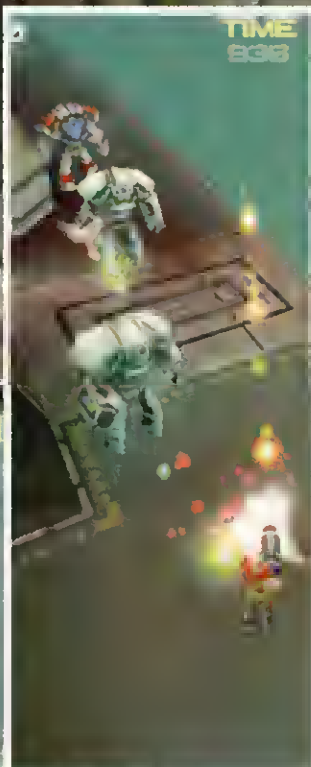


EXPENDABLE

★ Rage Software • Out February '99

Rage Software were kind enough to show us the latest version of their maelstrom of a shoot 'em up *Expendable* recently, and we were suitably impressed. At the moment their Newcastle division are beginning the task of constructing the levels and adding new enemies (there will

be a greater variety of opponents than the robots you see in these screenshots), plus the not so minor job of incorporating the story and scripted gameplay elements. Sadly, you're going to have to wait until next year to get your hands on it, so watch out for further updates soon.


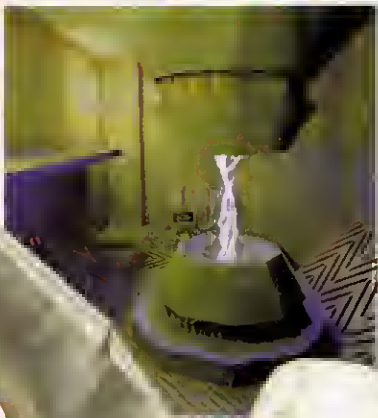



REQUIEM: WRATH OF THE FALLEN

★ Ubi Soft • Out October '98

We were lucky enough to have another look at Cyclone Studios' new 3D first-person shooter on a recent recce to their mother company 3DO in California, and it has to be said that it's looking mighty fine.

The fact that it uses Cyclone Studios' own proprietary 3D engine means that unlike so many other first-person shooters, it's got its own distinct look. "We've been working on this engine for well over two and a half years," says



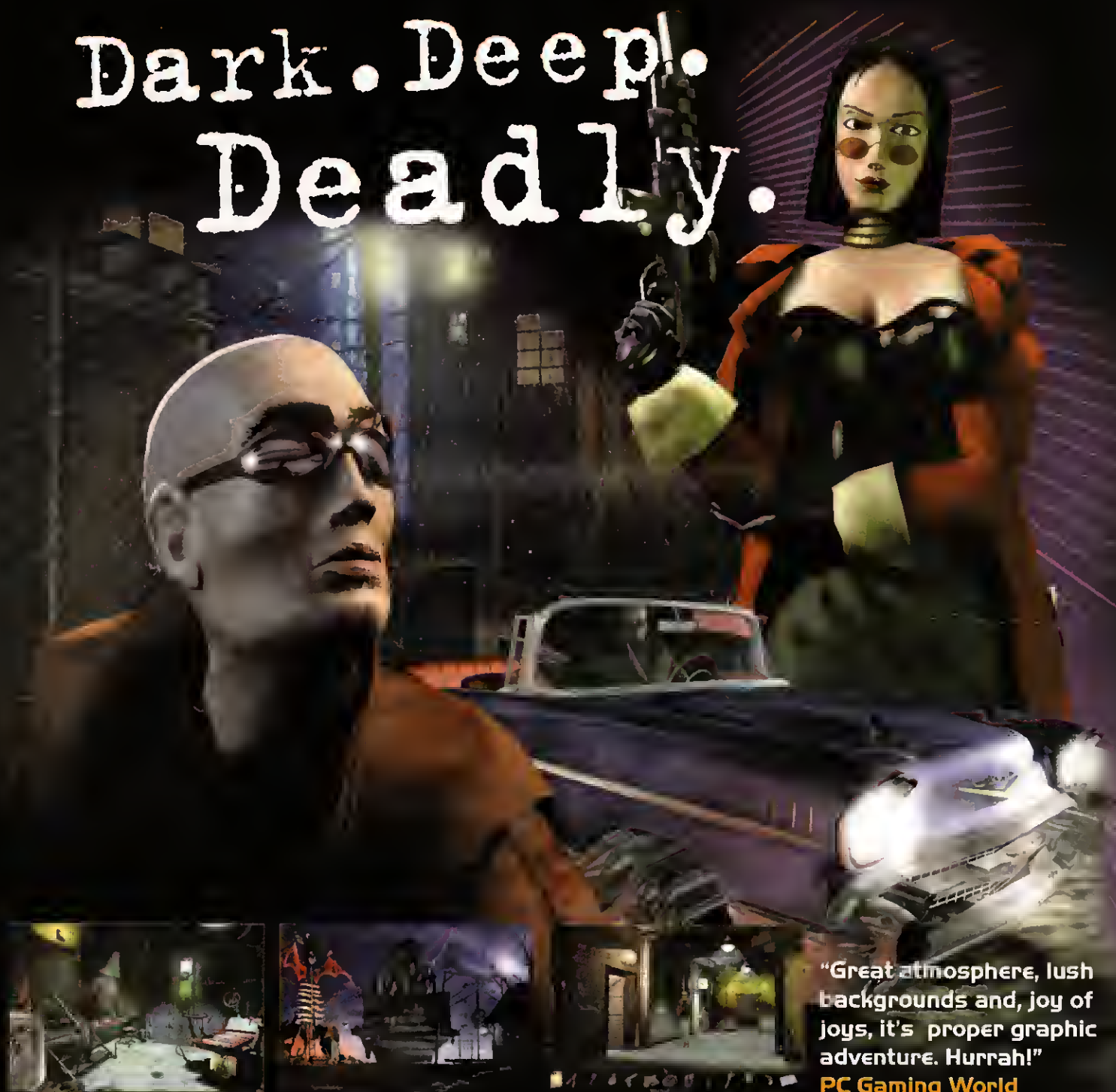
The fact that it uses Cyclone Studios' own proprietary 3D engine means that unlike so many other first-person shooters, it's got its own distinct look. "We've been working on this engine for well over two and a half years," says programmer Evan Margolin. "We wanted to create stuff that hasn't been done before. As far as the look, animations and effects go, we're still way ahead. In fact we're thinking of licensing our engine in the very near future."



NIGHTLONG

UNION CITY CONSPIRACY

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"Great atmosphere, lush backgrounds and, joy of joys, it's proper graphic adventure. Hurrah!"

PC Gaming World

Step Into the shadows of Union City and prepare yourself for an epic graphical adventure full of espionage and murder. Become Private Investigator Joshua Reev and join the hunt for the missing agent Simon Ruby. Featuring five huge levels, over 80 locations and more than 60 minutes of plot-driven video sequences, **Nightlong: Union City Conspiracy™** places you in the heart of a web of intrigue where betrayal and deception are your only companions.

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The gorgeous visuals reflect the true horror of war and darken the atmosphere.



The red troops in the foreground are moments away from seizing the windmill.



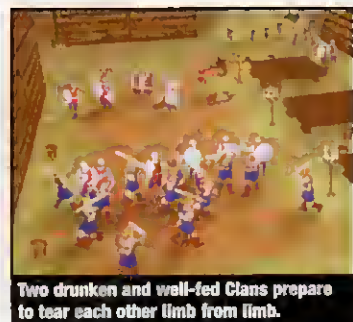
Raising the drawbridge thwarts an enemy's attack, as archers take up defensive positions on the battlements.



It's not looking good for the blue tribe. They're heavily outnumbered and several of them have already had a head loss (literally).



The blue team play 'spot the chicken'. (They're not the brightest of troops.)



Two drunken and well-fed Clans prepare to tear each other limb from limb.

MYTH 2: SOULBLIGHTER

The original *Myth* was a lavish, bloody slash 'em up. Craig Vaughan demands more of the same

THE DETAILS:

DEVELOPER Bungie Software
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive
WEBSITE www.bungie.com
OUT Spring '99

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- ★ It's *Myth* with bells, whistles and knobs on
- ★ It looks gorgeous, even without meaty hardware
- ★ Manic multiplayer frolics via Internet and LAN

When *Myth: The Fallen Lords* (PCZ #58, 80%) came along last year, it was definitely ahead of its time. It combined a truly dynamic game engine with luscious 3Dfx visuals to provide wargaming strategists with a novel twist on a deflated genre. Oh, and it had blood – gallons of the stuff.

With the sequel, *Myth 2: Soulblighter*, developers Bungie Software found themselves struggling with the age-old problem: how to fix something that wasn't broken. Thankfully, a quick gander at the

screenshots reveals that they appear to have found the solution. Instead of returning to the drawing board and producing a radically different game, Bungie appear to have allowed *Myth 2* to become the logical evolution of its proud father, rather than a total departure from it.

Indeed, your objective remains the

a variety of sadistic weapons to blow your opponents away (messily and colourfully), and there are some gloriously meaty sound effects.

The main criticism aimed at the original *Myth* was that it suffered from something of an identity crisis. It pitched itself as a thinking man's game, purporting to require a degree

“We’ve made the beginning levels easier, adding in-game hints and mission objectives”

same: take charge of your medieval army in a brutal battle of brawn and wits against computer or human adversaries; last man standing wins. Familiarity shouldn't breed contempt though, because what's under the *Myth 2* exterior has, thankfully, been vastly enhanced. You'll notice a cleaner and smoother 3D engine, courtesy of support for most next-generation 3D cards. There's improved artificial intelligence, a plethora of new and more engaging campaigns, and hordes of new enemies to massacre. You get to use

of strategy and planning, and then it just dumped you into the middle of frenzied 'murder, death, kill'-type situations. Many a beginner was carved up faster than a Sunday joint.

This time around though, the programmers appear keen to address this potential flaw, as a peek at their online development diary shows: “We've been doing a lot of work making the game easier for novice players – things like improving the in-game interface. We've made the beginning levels easier, adding in-game hints and mission objectives.”

Hardened gamers need not fret, however,

as the diary goes on: “We're approaching level design with the goal of making the ‘timid’ difficulty level a breeze, ‘normal’ a breeze for the first few levels, and ‘legendary’, well, that – that's just legendary”.

Since its released last year, *Myth* has gained cult status with Web-heads. That's probably due to the addictive Internet and LAN multiplayer modes. *Myth 2* will offer you a similar opportunity to meet, fraternise with and slaughter human opposition, and will no doubt also gather a devout following as a result.

Work on *Myth 2* continues apace, with the latest information being downloadable from www.bungie.com/myth/game.html. Hopefully, with the enhancements in place, the game will appeal to a broader section of the gaming community, rather than just fans of the genre. **EW**

**FIRST
ENCOUNTER**

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The graphics in *Age Of Empires 2* are drop-dead gorgeous, but what kind of machine will you need to run a game like this?



Age 2 takes you from the Dark Ages right through to mediaeval times.



Ridiculously high resolutions are planned for this visually stunning sequel.



Who needs thousands of *C&C* clones when a game like this is on the way?

AGE OF EMPIRES 2: AGE OF KINGS

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Ensemble
PUBLISHER Microsoft
WEBSITE www.microsoft.com
OUT Spring '99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ The sequel to one of the best strategy games ever
- ★ It's not just another *C&C* clone
- ★ It's bigger and better than the last one

This is one of those games that looks too good to be true (gorgeous graphics equals dodgy gameplay is a philosophy that all too often rings true with video games). Of course, you should all know by now that *Age Of Empires* (PCZ #54, 94%) is as addictive in terms of gameplay as it is pleasing to the eye. Which is reason enough to look forward to the forthcoming sequel with relish.

Developers Ensemble are confident they can produce a more than worthy sequel, and they've singled out combat, diplomacy and trading as key areas in which to expand and improve on what is already a brilliant game. To this end, there will be several ways

As hordes of *C&C* clones try to compete with Microsoft's classic, Bill prepares to unleash the sequel. *Chris Anderson* applauds

to achieve victory in *Age 2*. Combat-shy wusses can win the game by accumulating massive wealth through diplomacy and trading or building and defending wonders of the world.

Anyone up for a bit of a fight will not be disappointed. *Age 2* sports a vastly improved combat engine, with options to put units into classic military formations and set different levels of aggression for individual units. Additionally, the AI for military units, which came in for criticism from some quarters in the original game, has been completely redesigned, enabling extremely clever combat units which guard and patrol vital areas, follow important units around the place making sure nothing untoward happens to them, and generally kick ass in a more realistic and satisfying manner.

The game spans a thousand years, taking you from the Dark Ages to late mediaeval times, and you can now choose to play any of 13 different races. The race you choose to play determines to some extent which

“Anyone up for a fight will not be disappointed. *Age Of Empires 2* sports a vastly improved combat engine”

areas of research you explore: the Vikings, for example, are always handy in a scrap, so a military research path would seem to be in order for those playing with our spiky-hatted friends. The new research tree is massive (it has more

than 100 nodes), so there's plenty of opportunity for experimentation one way or another.

Other notable new features include production queues, improved navigation points and customisable hot keys. The big question, though, is whether or not Ensemble will include a 'proper' campaign in the game. You could argue that the freeform single-player missions in *AOE* were big enough to constitute a different campaign every time you play, but what we would really like to see is a more structured campaign in the style of, say, *Civilization 2*.

Whatever the case, we're confident that *Age Of Empires 2* will be one of the biggest games of 1999, and we'll be following it closely through its development period. Look out for an exclusive preview in *PC ZONE* soon.

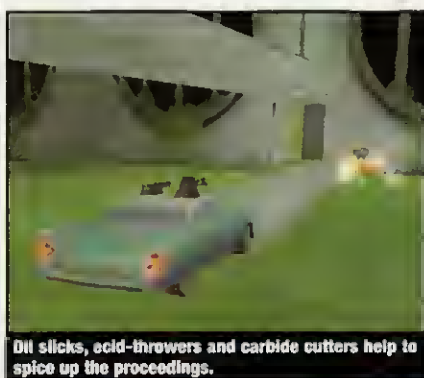
**FIRST
ENCOUNTER**



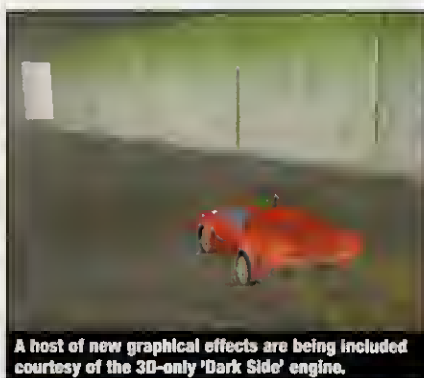
Interstate '82 will come packaged with a car editor, so you can give them your own paint job.



This time you can jump out of your car and nick someone else's.



Oil slicks, acid-throwers and carbide cutters help to spice up the proceedings.



A host of new graphical effects are being included courtesy of the 3D-only 'Dark Side' engine.



Cool cars, cool weapons, cool environment mapping... Dodgy tunes? You betcha.

INTERSTATE '82

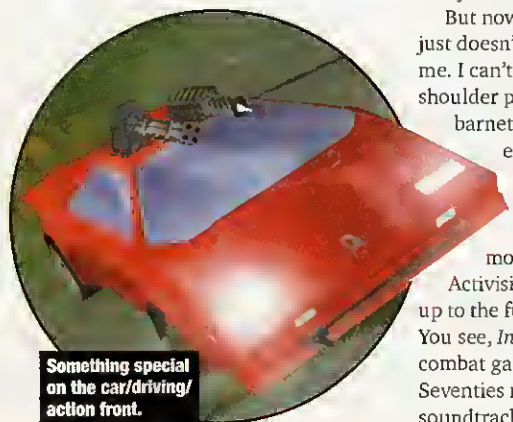
Activision's definition of 'new wave' is not the same as Paul Mallinson's (which is unprintable)

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Activision
PUBLISHER Activision
WEBSITE www.activision.com
OUT November '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- New, improved, 3D-only graphics engine
- Smaller, more compact afros
- Authentic Eighties soundtrack
- Car combat is usually top fun



Something special on the car/driving/action front.

Is it me, or has Eighties pop music aged really badly? At the time it seemed great: the Falklands war was raging and Thatcherism was destroying our lives, but we were oblivious, locked in our own little bedrooms rocking out on a diet of Depeche Mode, Cindy Lauper, T'Pau, Howard Jones, Nik Kershaw, Duran Duran and Frankie Goes To Hollywood. Oh, and how we rocked...

But nowadays that kind of stuff just doesn't cut it any more. Not for me. I can't take it seriously: big shoulder pads, Flock Of Seagulls barnets, lots of hairspray and

electronic drumming is what that kind of music says to me now.

Which is what worries me most about *Interstate '82*, Activision's long-awaited follow-up to the funk-tastic *Interstate '76*. You see, *Interstate '76* was a car combat game set in the '70s, with Seventies music used as the soundtrack to the action. *Interstate*

'82, however, is a car combat game set six years later, which means that... Aargh! Ugh. No! You get my drift.

Regardless of that, *Interstate '82* is shaping up to be something special on the car/driving/action front – which it'll have to be to knock the wind out of *Carmageddon II*'s sails this winter.

This time playing as 'bad-ass road legend' Taurus, and teaming up with

“In total there will be 20 massive levels in the final game, including a sewage farm”

your long-time partner Groove, you must head out across a never-before-seen universe of locations (including an alternate '80s Las Vegas) in a quest to overpower the top-secret forces that are trying to take over America.

A mixture of indoor and outdoor environments far more complex than those seen in *I'76* are being built using Activision's accelerator-only 'Dark Side' 3D engine. In total there will be

20 massive levels in the final game, including a sewage farm. This new engine has also introduced a number of other graphical advancements, as you'll see in the modelling of the many in-game cars, or the superb water reflections. Homing missiles now trail smoke convincingly, and the oil-thick fire of an exploding car obviously shows that Activision's in-house programming team know what an exploding car looks like. All in all, very cool.

But what to do about that Eighties soundtrack? Well, Activision have hinted that they may localise it, possibly signing up a big name to supply the music. While some people may be more than content to hear the likes of 'Everything Counts' or 'Wild Boys' warbling away in the background while they play, I'm not one of them. If, on the other hand, the likes of the Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, The Clash, Big Black and Hüsker Dü were involved, I don't think I'd be able to resist. There's just no accounting for taste. **PCZ**

I HAVE AN ENORMOUS TANK BATTALION.

I'VE TELEPORTED INTO MY SATELLITE.

I HAVE AN ARSENAL OF WEAPONS AT MY FINGERTIPS.

I'VE DRIVEN MY VEHICLES LIKE A MANIAC.

So WHY AM I DEAD?

I AM ONE WITH THE CROSSHAIRS.

I TORCHED A TAERKAST BIPLANE.

I KNOW HOW TO DEFEND MY HOST STATION.

I AM A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.

I'VE DESTROYED BUILDINGS IN MY WAY.

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After almost three years in development, *EAW* is ready to take on the likes of *Fighter Legends*, *Screaming Demons Over Europe*, *Microsoft Combat Flight Simulator* et al.



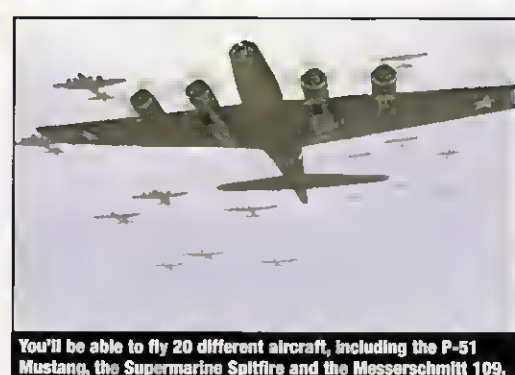
MicroProse have managed to poach Tsuyoshi 'TK' Kawahito (who has worked for Jane's Combat Simulations on *Longbow 2* and *F-15*) to help get *EAW* out of the door.



Multiplayer options include modem support for one-on-one dogfights, and eight-player LAN.



Combat missions include Fighter Sweep, Bomb Target, Escort Flight, Intercept and Interdiction (whatever that means).



You'll be able to fly 20 different aircraft, including the P-51 Mustang, the Supermarine Spitfire and the Messerschmitt 109.

EUROPEAN AIR WAR

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER MicroProse US
PUBLISHER MicroProse
WEBSITE www.microprose.com
OUT November '98

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- ★ It's from the people who brought us the rather spiffing *Pacific Air War* and the excellent *Falcon 3.0*
- ★ The entire game has just had a complete overhaul and now sports a zoomtastic new engine and flight models
- ★ You can fly 20 different realistically modelled WWII fighter planes and take part in the Battle of Britain
- ★ As well as the game, there's a comprehensive multimedia section that covers all the aircraft and weaponry used at the time

When we first saw *European Air War*, the much-hyped sequel to *Pacific Air War* (PCZ #45, 79%), around two years ago on a trip to MicroProse's US headquarters in Baltimore. Even then the game looked impressive – and that was without hardware support. At the time, everybody was getting excited about 3D accelerator cards, and the team were desperately trying to incorporate 3Dfx and PowerVR support before the game shipped.

Any game that enables you to rip holes in Nazis can't be bad.

Jeremy Wells has got a very itchy trigger finger

But that was then, and this is now. After what seems like years, a massive code overhaul and months of testing, *European Air War* is almost ready for release. And about bloody time, too. Aren't the programming team a bit miffed that, just when they're about

different aircraft, all with their own flight models, and you can actually take part in the Battle of Britain, flying for either the Germans or Allies."

And what else? Well, *EAW* is one of the first games to sport MicroProse's new dynamic game world. What this

"EAW is one of the first games to sport MicroProse's new dynamic game world. This means you can actually choose one of two career paths, which has a direct bearing on what missions and aircraft you fly"

to release their labour of love, almost every other publisher and his dog are putting out a World War II combat flight simulator?

"We're confident that our product will stand up against the competition," maintains programmer Tom Whittaker. "Our game has a number of unique features that set it apart from the sims from Electronic Arts, Microsoft and Activision."

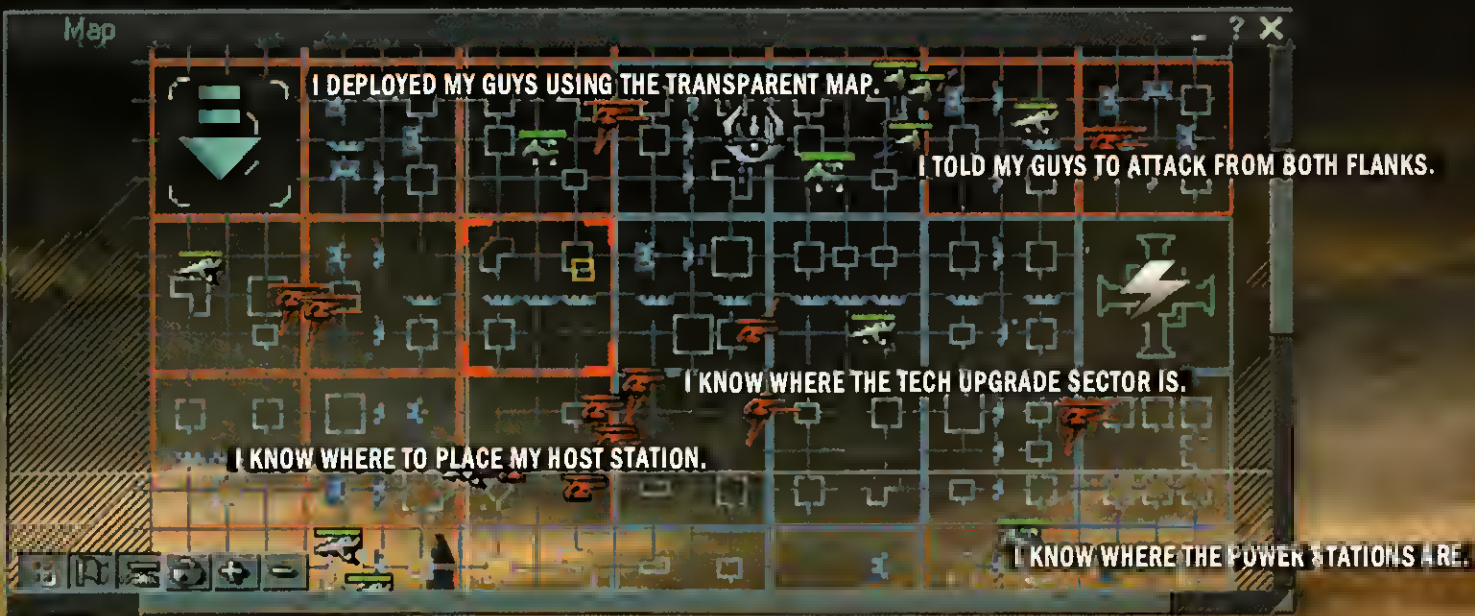
Such as? "Well, we've now got total 3D hardware support, including Voodoo2. You can fly more than 20

means is that you can actually choose one of two career paths, which has a direct bearing on what missions and aircraft you fly. The first runs from July 10 to September 15 1940 and encompasses the Battle of Britain; the second tour is based on US Army Air Corps activity between April 1 1943 and April 25 1945. How you fare in the cockpit actually affects which missions you're given and how the campaign as a whole progresses. You can't actually change the course of history, but it means that, unlike

other historically based sims that follow a potentially limited linear campaign structure, the unit you choose and the missions you fly determine how your career and the game progress. In real terms, this means that once you've played through one campaign, you can start a new career with a different unit, and the game will be different second time around.

The sheer number of planes you can fly, the dynamic game world, the varied mission types and the fact that *EAW* has been in production for so long indicate that it should stand up well against the wave of rival WWII flight sims that are about to be released. Fans of *Pacific Air War* (PCZ #45, 79%) at least should not be disappointed. "Everything we've done is basically geared towards making *EAW* better and faster than ever," says Whittaker. Let's hope he's right. [E]

FIRST ENCOUNTER



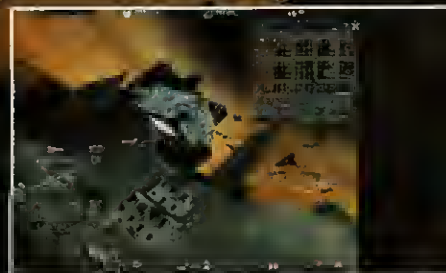
I SAW A MYKONIAN CUBOID FORMATION.

SO WHY AM I STILL DEAD?

I KNOW WHICH SECTORS ARE SECURE.

I'M BEING SMART ABOUT MY MOVES.

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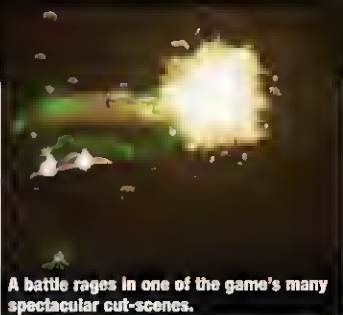
Microsoft

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Beauty meets the beast in

X-COM ALLIANCE

What could be better than an *X-COM* game with 3D combat courtesy of the *Unreal* engine? Nothing, says *Chris Anderson*



A battle rages in one of the game's many spectacular cut-scenes.



As in *Unreal*, *Alliance* uses coloured lighting to great effect.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER MicroProse
PUBLISHER MicroProse
WEBSITE www.microprose.com
OUT Spring '99

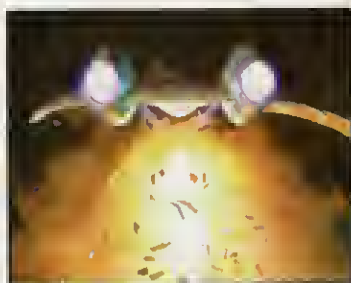
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ It's a new *X-COM* game.
- ★ It uses the *Unreal* engine.
- ★ It has more variety than any other 3D shooter out there.
- ★ It really *could* be the best game ever.

It seems too good to be true. The resource management and research tree of *X-COM* married to the incredibly powerful *Unreal* graphics engine is a prospect that should have any self-respecting action gamer drooling with anticipation. This could be the first time ever that we see an accomplished 3D shoot 'em up with a convincing and challenging strategy game attached to it. Not that we're taking anything away from games like *Klingon: Honour Guard* (PCZ #68, 94%) or *Jedi Knight* (PCZ #62, 95%), which are brilliant games in their own right. We just feel there are only so many straightforward shooters people can take.

With *X-COM Alliance* poised to deliver exactly that, we went to MicroProse's Chipping Sodbury HQ to quiz game designer Andy Williams on what will surely be, barring a completely unforeseen disaster, *X-COM*'s finest hour. Andy explained how *X-COM Alliance* was conceived: "*Unreal* undoubtedly has a fantastic graphics engine. It's a good game that oozes atmosphere and has a couple of moments of sheer brilliance. But we thought we could take the engine and do a lot better. You could argue that *Unreal* was a pretty good showcase for the engine but we felt the gameplay was fairly linear. We want to create a game that not only surprises you at every turn, but has lots of unexpected events to scare you rigid. *Alliance* will have ominous dimly-lit levels which you will hardly dare to step into, and times of genuine tension that fill you with anxiety in the way that a truly great game should."

STRANDED



The story behind *Alliance* places you once again in command of the X-COM combat unit. This time around you've been taken through a time warp and dropped straight into the middle of a battle between the aliens and a race called the Ascidians. With no way back to your own homeworld you have no choice but to take on the alien threat, but this time with the Ascidians as your allies. This scene from the Intro to the game shows an Ascidian fighter taking out a Sectoid ship.



Alliance's gorgeous graphics reflect the game's dark and sinister atmosphere perfectly.



"After you mate... No really, I'll just stay here."

Having seen the game in action, we can vouch for the fact that MicroProse are well and truly on course for realising their dream. The levels are absolutely massive and

and explosions. Of course, fantastic graphics do not a great game make, a fact that many people who have played *Unreal* will be more than happy to point out. Fortunately, the

"Unreal undoubtedly has a fantastic graphics engine. But we thought we could take the engine and do a lot better. *Alliance* will have times of genuine tension"

much more varied than those in *Unreal* and even *Klingon: Honour Guard*, the game which had PC ZONE's newly-converted Trekkie Steve Hill well and truly hooked for the entirety of last issue and beyond. The detail in the scenery is hugely impressive, with decorative walls and ceilings, ornamental landmarks and drop-dead gorgeous lighting effects

heritage of the *X-COM* series opens up gameplay possibilities that will make other 3D shooters look pale in comparison.

X-COM MARK 5

While much of your time in *Alliance* will undoubtedly be spent killing alien scum in your latest attempt to save the world from a fate



CV MICRO PROSE

X-COM

A brief history of the *X-COM* games – find out which ones you've missed

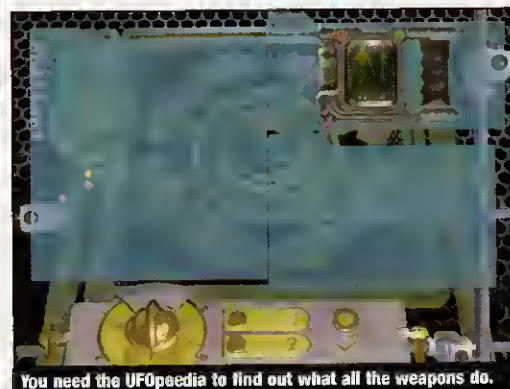
1994 *X-COM: Enemy Unknown* (known as *UFO: Enemy Unknown* in the UK) is released to critical acclaim. A legendary game series is born.

1994 This is quickly followed by *X-COM: Terror From The Deep*. Criticised by some as a cash-in (it was basically *X-COM* underwater), it was brilliant nonetheless.

1997 *X-COM: Apocalypse* is released. The first game in the series to use real-time combat, it was widely regarded as the best game in the series to date.

1998 The release of *X-COM: Interceptor* sees a huge departure from previous *X-COM* games, with the introduction of 3D space combat for the first time.

FACTS AND FIGURES



You need the UFOpedia to find out what all the weapons do.

As in all previous *X-COM* games, the UFOpedia will prove an important point of reference in *Alliance*. Here you will find information on every weapon and object in the game. This is the place to come when you can't figure out what that strange alien thing you've

picked up is for. Of course, none of the alien weapons or items appear here until you've successfully researched them in your laboratory.

ALIENS AHOY

Seasoned *X-COM* veterans will be familiar with many of the aliens in *Alliance*, although there are a few new nasties to quench your thirst for alien blood. They vary wildly in appearance as well as the way in which they behave, but they all have one thing in common: they want you to die, horribly. Here are just a few of the aliens waiting to kick your ass in *Alliance*.



CHRYSSALID

As soon as a Chryssalid detects an enemy unit it will move straight towards it and launch an assault. It ignores any damage it's taking from the player, moves at an incredible speed, and won't break off an attack under any circumstances. For this reason you have to immediately attack it with the best weapon you've got or it will use its claws to deliver near-fatal blows and kill you in seconds before moving on to the next *X-COM* unit in its vicinity.

ETHEREAL

These are the most intelligent of the alien troops and will only attack from strategically sound locations. They have access to all alien weaponry as well as the ability to fly. Not the type of creature you'd want to bump into in a dark alley, or indeed anywhere else.



HOUSEKEEPER

These things hang from ceilings and walls and attack using their built-in weaponry. They use their unique vantage point to circle round *X-COM* units, thus making themselves a moving target and disorienting the player. A complete pain in the arse, basically.



SECTOPOD

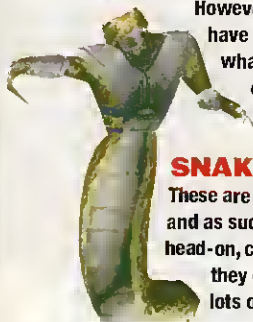
Sectopods are slow-moving and capable of taking immense damage. They have built-in plasma weaponry and the ability to move while shooting, making them difficult to hit.

However, they're not very bright and have no strategic skills whatsoever, so you should be able to outwit them quite easily (unless you're quite stupid yourself).



SLAKEMAN

These are combat-oriented creatures, and as such will attempt to attack you head-on, constantly firing to pin you into a dangerous position so they can use their spit attack. They also have the ability to take lots of damage and can attack at close range with their claws.



This on-screen map helps you keep track of where you are, which is just as well considering the game's massive levels.

WE ARE NOT ALONE



Check out what your other team members are up to.

Unlike other 3D shooters, *Alliance* makes you responsible for the actions of other members of your team as well as your own. Note the four cameras at the top of the screen; each one represents a member of your team and shows their current location. You can jump straight into their boots at any time if they get into trouble, which brings a strong element of strategy to the

proceedings and represents a huge step forward for the 3D shoot 'em up genre, with you having to think about the consequences of your actions for the first time.

ANDY WILLIAMS

Andy is known for game design and hanging round chip shops in Leicester.

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

ANDY *Asteroids*, in a chip shop in Leicester.

PCZ What is the best game you have ever played?

ANDY No hesitation here whatsoever: *Elite* by a considerable margin. It's still a classic game, which is why half the development community seem hell-bent on producing their own interpretations of the game.

PCZ What game are you playing at the moment?

ANDY *Wetrix* on the N64.

PCZ What was the last game you paid money for?

ANDY Er, *Wetrix* on the N64, spookily enough.

PCZ Have you ever been in a tight? If so, when and why?

ANDY Yes, someone tried to mug me once, which was obviously a clear invitation for a fight. I duffed him up though, so he never got anything out of me in the end.

➔ worse than round-the-clock showings of *Neighbours* and *Noel's House Party*, an equal proportion of the game will be spent simply staring at your screen thinking about what you are going to

COM soldiers in your squad for each level, but you'll need to make sure you've given them the best equipment at their disposal before sending them in to take on the aliens.

“We're not setting out to produce a 3D shoot 'em up with *X-COM* gameplay tagged on as an afterthought”

do next. Research and resource management will play as important a part in *Alliance* as it did in the previous *X-COM* games. Any alien weapons or items picked up during the 3D sections of the game can be researched and then used in later missions. You can have up to five *X-*

This is what has always made the *X-COM* series so damned addictive, a fact I pointed out to the team during my visit in the hope that they will take an 'it ain't broke so don't fix it' approach to designing the latest game in the series. Andy was quick to respond: “*X-COM* fans have no cause

to worry with *Alliance*. We're not setting out to produce a 3D shoot 'em up with *X-COM* gameplay tagged on at the end as an afterthought. What would be the point of using the *X-COM* branding without exploiting it fully? You will be in no doubt throughout the game that you are indeed in the *X-COM* universe, but this time the action sections of the gameplay will be better than ever.”

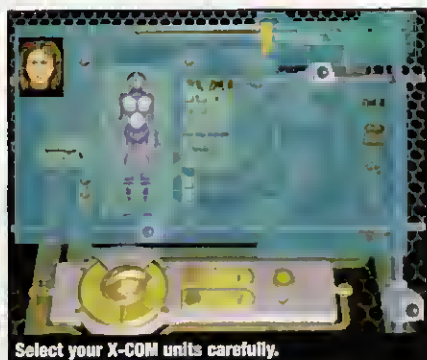
LET'S GET TOGETHER

The nature of *Alliance's* gameplay allows for some very interesting multiplayer options indeed. Imagine the scenario: five human players form

a team. One of the players takes the role of commander and directs the rest of the crew, who have no idea of what's going on in the gameworld apart from what their commander tells them. Pitch them against another human team with the same set-up; to say this sort of scenario would be ten times more tense and satisfying than standard *Quake* deathmatch games is an incredible understatement.

Of course, teamplay is only a small part of the multiplayer experience in *Alliance*. Normal deathmatch levels will be supported with players having the freedom of *Alliance's* massive levels in which to happily blow each

PREPARE FOR BATTLE



Select your X-COM units carefully.

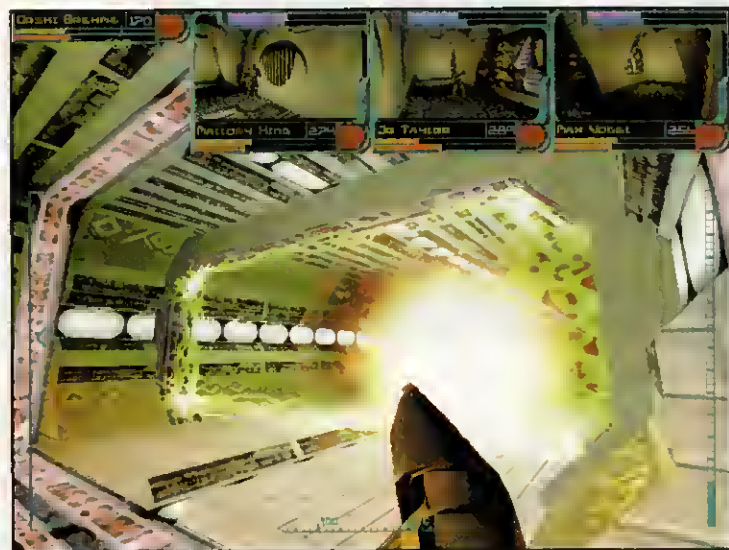
To succeed in *X-COM Alliance* you need more than a quick trigger-finger and an enormous gun. Choosing the right X-COM units for each mission is of paramount importance. After each mission briefing you're taken to this screen to pick your squad armed with the information you've just been given. Different units have different abilities and excel in different areas. For example, units with low psionic (mind control) powers will be useless on a mission against aliens with high psionic abilities and will be more likely to panic when things go wrong. The decisions you make on this screen will probably be the deciding factor in determining your overall success (or failure) in the mission.



☛ Trust two Sectoids to stand right in front of my enormous gun. Doh!

☛ The graphics are drop dead gorgeous. We want *X-COM Alliance* now.

☛ The action in *Alliance* is explosive – literally. No really, it is. I insist.

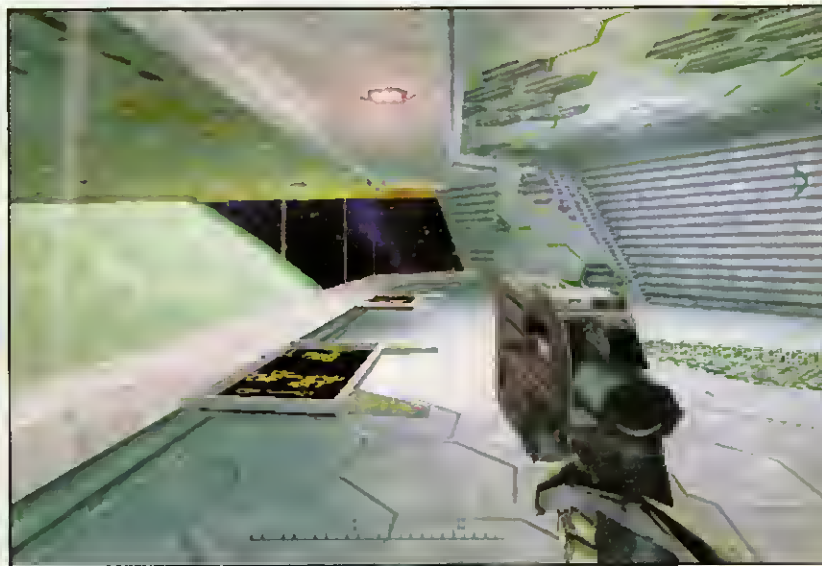


other into tiny little pieces. All of the weapons and items discovered in the single-player game will be available for use in multiplayer, making for one of the most varied deathmatch experiences ever. The team are still finalising details of yet more multiplayer options as gamers in the UK are becoming increasingly aware of the joys of multiplayer gaming and are rapidly catching up with their US counterparts, who have been enjoying deathmatch fraggings en masse for some time now.

Finally, having licenced the best graphics engine available and ensured quality of gameplay with the

X-COM branding, Andy has turned his attention to the audio side of the game, which he feels is one of the most important factors in the overall experience: "The audio side of things is often criminally overlooked. I want sudden noises to startle you at every turn, over-the-top sound effects for weapons and explosions, and deeply atmospheric understated music to create a real sense of tension. If we can get all these elements right we will end up with a very atmospheric experience which you'll find well and truly scary."

Stop Andy, you're frightening me, please stop. **PCZ**



X-COM FOR EVERYONE

But what if you're not a fan of the X-COM series? *Jeremy Wells*, who wouldn't touch any of the earlier X-COM games with a shitty stick, takes a long hard look at *Alliance*

X-COM is by no means everybody's cup of tea. The turn-based combat of the earlier titles, the in-depth research trees and brainpower required to finish the games has meant that the *X-COM* phenomenon is lost on many of those addicted to the likes of *Quake* and *C&C*. With its lush graphics and intense gameplay however, *X-COM Alliance* looks set to change the way the series is viewed forever.

I've got to admit that I've never really seen the appeal of *X-COM*. Chris raves about it at every opportunity and maintains that it's the most addictive and intense series he's ever played – and let's face it, he's played a lot of games.

Intrigued by his undying commitment to the *X-COM* cause, I tagged along with him on a recent visit to the MicroProse HQ in Chipping Sodbury where the game is being developed to see what all the fuss was about.

I have to say that I was more than a little impressed with what I saw. I'd dabbled just a bit with *X-COM Interceptor*, but felt that it was little more than a smart *Wing Commander/Privateer* clone. *X-COM Alliance* however is a game that I'm desperate to play. Not only does it look fantastic, but if the developers can pull it off (and Chris is convinced that they can) it could be the next step in third-person 3D action games. Because it combines action, strategy and resource management in one game, it really could be a 'thinking man's *Quake*', and that's a game that I'm as keen as Chris to get my hands on.

UPDATE

There are only two teams in it and one is ACTUA SOCCER 3

Lifelong *Actua Soccer* fan **Jeremy Wells** has recently been seen flirting with a good-looker of Canadian descent. Sheffield's *Actua Soccer* team are busy with the high heels and the make-up

THE DETAILS

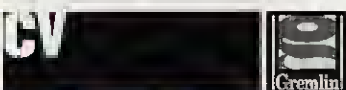
DEVELOPER Gremlin Interactive
PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive
WEBSITE www.gremlin.co.uk
OUT October '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Previous games in the series have been great, and this looks like being the best yet
- ★ There are over 450 different teams to play as, and 30 different stadiums to play in
- ★ You can now adjust the speed of play and indulge in some Denilson-like foot magic
- ★ It's being developed at Gremlin's HQ in Sheffield, and us Brits quite clearly make the best football games



The tackling has been substantially improved, with the emphasis now on timing and position.



ACTUA SPORTS

Actua Soccer was the first game released under the Actua Sports banner, but there have been quite a few since

1995 *Actua Soccer* is released to much applause.

1996 The not-so-good (ie very similar) *Euro '96* fails to address the problems that dogged the original release; Gremlin and *ZONE* fall out.

1997 *Actua Soccer 2* is released. It's better and faster than the original, but *ISS Pro* on the PlayStation retains the 'best tootie game ever' tag.

1998 *Actua Golf* is released and is not at all comparable to EA's *PGA* golf games.

1998 *Actua Hockey* doesn't really compare with EA's brilliant *NHL98*.

1998 *Actua Tennis* is really rather good (see review on page 102).

There are two games we regularly play in the PC ZONE office. One of them is *Quake II* (PCZ #59, 97%), which we use to 'test' our network by indulging in a little deathmatch during the course of the day, and the other is *World Cup '98* (PCZ #65, 91%). It used to be *Quake* (PCZ #43, 96%) and *Actua Soccer 2* (PCZ #59, 90%), and before that it was *Doom* (PCZ #13, 96%) and *Sensible Soccer* (PCZ #6, 70%). And before that we used to run around the park playing 'war' with bits of stick and penknives, or throw down a couple of jumpers for goalposts and have a kickabout.

The most relevant fact here is that we used to play *Actua Soccer 2* all the time until EA Sports eventually managed to live up to everything they'd promised with their rather good *World Cup '98*. Gremlin are obviously keen to outdo EA Sports' latest effort, and have decided to take

one or two leaves out of the Canadians' book in an effort to make the latest in the *Actua Soccer* series better than anything seen before.

As a result, the latest incarnation sports a variable speed option that enables you to slow the game down, and for the first time sees the introduction of FIFA-style player 'skills' that enable you to indulge in the kind of foot wizardry seen in last summer's Nike TV ad campaign.

"The *Actua Soccer* games were

always dead quick and very easy to pick up and play," argues producer Tony Casson, "but we felt that once you'd got to a certain level and learnt how to play the game, there wasn't much left to do.

"So we thought we'd add some new special moves and introduce the facility to slow the game down so you can spend more time on the ball. This added sophistication should give skilled players a little edge in the game - though people using just the basics should still find it rewarding and still very much a pick-up-and-play game. Hopefully, this will give the game more depth and appeal."

LOOKING BETTER

As soon as you see the game running, it's pretty clear that *Actua Soccer 3* represents a massive step up in terms of detail and player animation. There are now over 30 different stadiums to play in, all accurately rendered and pre-lit, and thanks to new capture-compression technology there are





Loads more compressed motion-capture data makes for even more realistic movement.



The player detail is impressive thanks to around 30 per cent more polygons and a new textured skin.



Now you have to measure each pass using the power bar.

now approximately 10,000 frames of motion-captured animation for even greater realism.

"This time round we felt that the players must have a larger-than-life quality with exaggerated moves accentuating both skilful and bad play," explains Tony. "This will serve

"Petit has a ponytail; Bergkamp can be picked out by his Beavis-like forehead; and Seaman has an appropriately ridiculous 'strong-man-at-the-circus' moustache"

to reward the player during the game, and make for some excellent replays."

Each player is now also made up of around 30 per cent more polygons than before, and is covered in a textured skin that prevents tearing at the joints. The overall effect is impressive. The players in *Actua Soccer 3* are quite possibly the most refined ever found in a computer game, and it's often possible to tell who you're passing the ball to simply by the way they look. Petit has got a

ponytail, Bergkamp can be picked out by his Beavis-like forehead, and Seaman has an appropriately ridiculous 'strong man at the circus'-style moustache.

"We've now incorporated interchangeable heads and hair, which enables us to create a pretty

accurate lookalike for most players," adds Tony.

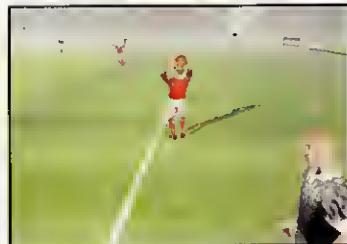
The fact that they are constructed from single mesh models means they also look a lot more solid than the players in *World Cup '98*, and the animation is visibly a lot smoother.

Each player also has individual stats that represent their on-screen ability. There's nothing new in this idea, but *Actua Soccer 3* has got to be the first game where you can actually notice the difference in players' stats

Barry Davies and another celeb pundit will be on hand to talk you through each game. Let's hope they bring back Trevor Brooking - anyone, in fact, but Chris Bloody Waddle!



For the first time you'll be able to toggle the speed of the game.



CPU-controlled players now make more intelligent and frequent runs.

when you play. Players also now have a preferred foot. It doesn't sound much of an innovation, but it actually makes a lot of sense.

"Motion-capture animation can be flipped at no extra cost," explains Tony, "and a stat can be included in the player data which details their preferred foot - left, right or both. This means you now have to think more about playing a player out of position. If you play a left-footed player on the right wing, for instance, he may lose accuracy when attempting to cross into the box. This won't render a player useless, but it should make you think twice about your tactics and formation."

PLAYING BETTER

Actua Soccer 3 undoubtedly looks better than its predecessors, but it's only when you play the game that you start to notice just how different it really is. As far as player control is concerned, you have a lot more to do - if you want to. As well as the

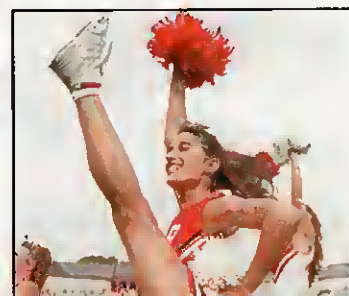
THE NAME OF THE GAME

It's not 'soccer', it's *football*!

It's such a shame that it's called *Actua Soccer 3*, isn't it? Anyone who professes any degree of interest in the beautiful game knows that 'soccer' is a dirty word that was only introduced so that Americans could distinguish what the rest of the world is talking about. To them, football is about padding, helmets, cheerleaders, complicated set plays, and picking up a rugby ball and running with it. It's not right. Surely FIFA could intervene and do something? It's our game, and it's called football. Why can't Gremlin call it *Actua Football 3*? It doesn't slip off the tongue as well, but there are principles at stake here.

If you have access to the Internet, point your browser at Gremlin's site (www.gremlin.co.uk) and let them know how you feel via their chat forum or with a strong but firm email.

Your language needs you.



Let's face it, this is the only thing that's good about American Football.

PLAY, WHATEVER THE WEATHER

Floodlights on, let play continue

Actua Soccer 2 sported some pretty pukka weather effects, and they're back with a vengeance in *Actua Soccer 3*. As well as playing in the wind (which now actually affects the ball when it's in flight), snow and rain, you can opt to play at different times of the day. When visibility is poor the floodlights come on, casting luvverly ickle shadows around each player. Isn't that nice?



It's snowing - so you play with one of Mr Del Monte's finest. And just check out these shadows.

toggleable speed feature and various 'skill' moves, *Actua Soccer 3* gives you a lot more control over what your players actually do on-screen. Passing is no longer automatic, for instance - using a power bar and directional guides, you have to estimate just how hard to strike the ball. "This should influence and encourage passing and build up play," says Tony. "You now need to anticipate passes far more than ever before, as well as thinking about which pass to make."

As well as the facility to make 40-yard, Beckham-style passes, you can now also pull off some cool flicks and one-twos, and there's more scope for leaping for headers, controlling the ball or making a first-time touch. Overall, it's a marked improvement - not just over *Actua Soccer 2*, but also over other motion-captured football games, because you don't feel as though you're waiting for your player to complete an animation cycle before he can execute your next move.

Unlike *World Cup '98*, players are still selected automatically, depending on how close they are to the ball, but you can now override this and cycle through the players that are nearest to play, and retain control of a player if you want to. This solves those annoying auto-player select problems and makes positioning a player for a tackle much easier.

You'll be pleased to hear that the almost-useless 'standard' tackle has been dropped in favour of a more effective and speedy 'toe in' affair. Also, it no longer takes an age to get up again after a successful sliding tackle, and the gloriously effective shoulder barge has been tweaked to make it more difficult to pull off.

"In *Actua Soccer 2*, timing a normal tackle was difficult in some circumstances due to the turning circle of the players," admits Tony. "Lining up and timing your player's position to steal the ball from an opponent was very difficult, and if you messed up you were left wide open. The new tackling and shoulder charge moves really balance up this area of the game. Now, the emphasis really is on timing. It will be a lot easier to orient yourself to the ball carrier, and exactly when you decide to dive in is crucial."

ALTOGETHER BETTER


The improved control system, enhanced graphics and the introduction of a toggleable speed feature will undoubtedly boost *Actua Soccer 3*'s appeal to those of us currently addicted to *World Cup '98*, but it doesn't end there. The squads are bang up to date (the alpha we played had Dwight Yorke up front for Man Utd - and this was only a day

after his transfer was confirmed), and this time round the players actually play where they are supposed to.

The 450 teams (which includes the English leagues, national squads and various other top teams from around the globe) are accurately represented, as are the 30-odd stadiums. What's more, team formations are pretty much what you'd expect, and some sides visibly play a long-ball game or a neat pass-to-feet-style game.

As well as playing in the usual leagues and cups, you can also set up just about any custom competition you want, from knockout cups to special leagues. You can even set the number of points for a win and a loss (!?).

Altogether, judging by what we've seen so far, it could well be a case of third time lucky for *Actua Soccer*. There is some serious competition from *World Cup '98*, and there's also a club-based game on the way very shortly which uses a new 'enhanced' game engine. However, if Gremlin manage to live up to their promises we could be in for a fabulous footie fest once the nights start to draw in. Which basically means that our Publisher will get in a strop when we refuse to stop playing football games in the office when we should be answering the phone.

C'est la vie, as approximately half the Arsenal squad would say. 



TONY CASSON



Gremlin producer Tony is a great lover of the beautiful game and has worked on a number of games for Gremlin Interactive. He's

determined to make *Actua Soccer 3* the best football game available for the PC

PCZ Which was the first game you ever played?

TONY *Monster Maze* on the ZX8.

PCZ Which was the last game you paid money for?

TONY *Quake II*.

PCZ Which is the best game you've ever played?

TONY Probably *Dune 2*, though *Quake II* over a network comes pretty close.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so, when?

TONY Yeah, I was walking on the docks (Oh yeah? - Ed) one day when I bumped into this guy with blond hair, who was dressed in red. He pushed me, I pushed him back, and we ended up in a right brawl. I finished him off with a roundhouse. Oh, hang on... Wasn't that *Streetfighter 2* on the SNES? Oh, my God! My head's just burst!



More is being made of headers - now you can direct them and execute cool flick-ons.



You can execute smart one-twos and through-balls.



There are 450 teams to choose from, including loads of English teams, national squads and the cream of the world's club sides.

MORE SEAMAN THAN JAMES

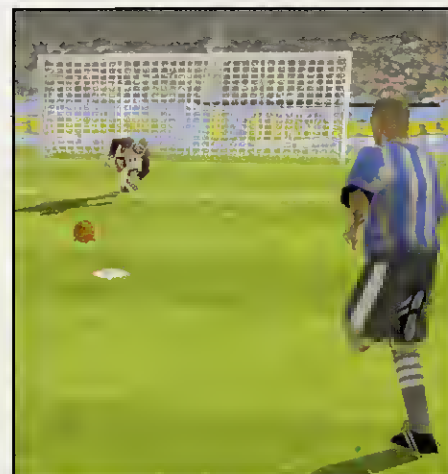
Gone are the unpredictable goalies of the previous games

The goalkeepers in the previous *Actua Soccer* games were more David James than David Seaman. In other words, they were pretty erratic to say the least, dropping the ball at the most inopportune moments; rolling the ball out to an opposition player one game, and then saving every shot the next. The keepers in *Actua Soccer 3* are a big improvement, and their behaviour is more consistent in that they'll have distinct personalities.

"I think we went a little too far in *Actua Soccer 2*," explains producer Tony Casson. "The keepers need to have a personality, and areas that they excel at and areas that they aren't too hot on. Basically, there will be three areas we'll cover. Shot stopping: In *Actua Soccer 3* some keepers are good at palming the ball, others will catch it and others will miss it. Then there's coming out for the ball: some keepers will commit themselves too early, leaving themselves open to a chip shot, others will stay on their line. Lastly, different keepers will be good and bad at blocking and parrying the ball.

This will create more goalmouth scrambles in the six-yard box, which adds to the general excitement. You'll also be able to select a player to kick the ball to, and to zoom in on players."

Keepers now come off their line in an attempt to close down the angle. They'll also come off their line for corners and commit themselves to reaching crosses. You'll also be in control when it comes to penalties.



Tom Clancy's **RAINBOW SIX**

Play
as if
5.7 Billion
Lives
Depended
on it.



PLAN THE ATTACK



EXECUTE THE MISSION



SAVE THE WORLD

The most revolutionary action/strategy game of its kind. Nothing comes close to offering such an exciting combination of strategy, team-building, realistic, three-dimensional graphics and true-to-life special forces action. **ONE SHOT KILLS.** The ultimate goal is to save yourself and the world from deadly terrorists. You must successfully complete 17 unique missions, and if you die, the game isn't over:

THE WORLD IS.



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Step outside, *Quake*, here comes

UPDATE

KANAAN

THE DETAILS

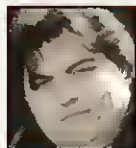
DEVELOPER Argonaut
PUBLISHER Ubi Soft
WEBSITE www.argonaut.com
OUT Spring '99

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ It's one of the first of a new breed of first-person shoot 'em ups that features massive outdoor environments as well as *Quake/Unreal*-like interior levels
- ★ You can drive/fly over 20 different vehicles, including boats and hover-planes
- ★ You get to dismember people with 16 different weapons, including a sniper's rifle
- ★ It's got two different 3D game engines to cope with exterior and interior settings



JULIAN ALDEN-SALTER,



Argonaut haven't really had much to do with the PC to date, but this guy has worked for Origin, you know

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

JULIAN Something on the ZX81, probably, though I seem to remember that I was really hooked on a *Centipede* clone for the Commodore 64 for a while.

PCZ What is the best game you've ever played?

JULIAN *Mercenary* on the Atari ST.

PCZ What was the last game you paid money for?

JULIAN *Wheel Of Fortune* for the Genesis. I only really bought it because I wrote it and they didn't send me a copy.

PCZ You're a big lad, have you ever been in a fight?

JULIAN Yep! [laughs loudly] I was at a fireworks party and this friend of mine was totally drunk. He kept jumping over the bonfire and kicking me up the arse and finding it completely hilarious. It didn't take long for me to get pissed off with him, so I let him do it one more time and then turned round and decked him. He never got up.

Just when you thought summer was over, it's time to step outside for a piece of the 3D first-person action. **Jeremy Wells** goes for a stroll with developers Argonaut

Both *Jedi Knight* (PCZ #55, 94%) and *Unreal* (PCZ #65, 93%) were quite literally a breath of fresh air after the claustrophobic *Quake* (PCZ #43, 96%) because you could actually venture outside. It made a nice change, but let's face it: nobody really spent too long under the sun. Inside, the levels looked a whole lot better in comparison to the exterior landscapes, which even with the advent of 3D acceleration looked blocky, uninspired and a bit shite.

The *Unreal* engine is supposed to be much better than the *Quake* engine at coping with exterior levels, which is allegedly why the developers behind *Duke 4 Ever* and *Daikatana* dumped id's engine halfway through their game's development in favour of Epic's plusher model. Despite the hype, we've still yet to see the kind of scenery that makes you yearn for a walking holiday in the Lake District. In short, is the *Unreal* engine up to it?

"I don't think so," maintains Julian Alden-Salter, *Kanaan*'s Producer. "Well, not for the kind of game we wanted to do. That's why we ended up writing two completely new 3D game engines. It obviously took a lot longer, but we think you'll agree that it was worth it."

Why was it necessary to develop two different engines? "We wanted our game to look and feel different. The *Quake* and *Unreal* engines are optimised for certain things. At the end of the day, they just can't handle exteriors; ours are nice and curvy."

As Julian boots up the latest build, it's pretty clear that the landscape on-screen is certainly more akin to the likes of Bullfrog's classic *Magic Carpet* (PCZ #21, 96%) than either *Unreal* or *Jedi*. "No one has got the landscapes and scale that we've got," boasts Julian. "Each level is approximately five square kilometres, and most of

them have got huge buildings that could be as big as an entire *Quake* map. We've also got over 20 vehicles, including APCs, boats, hover-planes and tanks that you can get in and control; and while you're on foot you've got 16 different weapons at your disposal, including a gauss gun and a really cool flame-thrower."

It all looks and sounds pretty impressive. So what's his favourite weapon? "The basic assault rifle is pretty good," admits Julian. "You can surgically rip people apart and you

"Most of the levels have huge buildings that could be as big as an entire *Quake* map"

JULIAN ALDEN-SALTER

don't run out of ammo. It's the standard weapon. The sniper's rifle is pretty cool though - you can zoom in on your target and blow his head clean off."

TEACHING OLD DOGS NEW TRICKS

As Julian continues to pick off the dog-like enemy characters on-screen, it's obvious that there's a pretty sophisticated AI routine running the show: some dogs run for cover, others seem to stop and sniff the air. Can we expect more intelligent enemies than the grunts found in *Quake*?

"*Kanaan* is completely un-*Quake*-like," argues Julian. "The characters behave as they would in a real-world situation. Our enemies can look, hear and smell you, and they aren't stupid. We've tried to make everything as realistic as possible. When you rush into the barracks, for instance, you might find a group of dogs sitting playing cards. We've got over 1500 different animations that we can use for all 12 different character types, each with their own

roles and priorities. They even go to the toilet."

So would it be fair to say that it's more *GoldenEye* (on the N64) than *Doom*? "Totally. In fact, when we were starting to pull our ideas together a few months ago, we kept hearing about *Metal Gear Solid* and thought that what we were doing sounded very similar. Thankfully, it's quite a different game. But stealth is important in *Kanaan*. Some missions might be better attempted at night - you might have to shoot out some searchlights before you risk going too far, for instance; some missions you can just steam on in, guns blazing. But there's always more than one way to complete a mission."

A WALK IN THE PARK

Kanaan has already been two years in development, and although originally slated for a November release it looks as though it will slip until spring next year, because there's just so much more the team want to do with the game. We're obviously keen to get our hands on it as soon as possible, but hopefully the lads will be allowed to take their time and make it the game they want it to be. One thing's for sure: *Kanaan* will definitely be worth the wait. **PCZ**

The range of weaponry is impressive - you'll have gauss guns, rocket launchers and flame-throwers to help you on your way.





A typical mission might involve rescuing the mayor and leading him to safety. It's more *GoldenEye* than *Quake*.



Head shots count, and you can blow enemies' arms and legs off and watch them crawl.



Kanaan will run under software and support various 3D accelerators, including Voodoo2.



Desert rats...

The explosions look quite fantastic.

...meet the dogs of war.

It's the future, and two races are at war - you're on the human rebel side.



NICE LEGS, SHAME ABOUT THE BOAT RACE

Pace versus polygons

You've probably noticed that the characters in *Kanaan* aren't nearly as detailed as those in *Unreal* or *Sin*. They could be, but it just wouldn't work for this type of game. Allow Simon Grell, one of the modellers working on *Kanaan*, to explain.

"Even with 3D acceleration there's a limit to how many texture-mapped polygons the PC can comfortably move around the screen at one time. Our characters and vehicles are made up at around 400 polygons each - and they haven't got skins; we've gone for a more basic approach. If we had more detailed characters, like those in *Unreal* that use up to and over 800 polygons, we'd have to cut back on how many we could use at one time because the frame rate would suffer.

"Because the action is largely centred outside, we wanted to try and populate the area with as many enemies as possible. In practice, you tend to shoot them from quite a distance anyway, especially if you're using the sniper's rifle, so you don't get to see them up close until they're dead. It's a compromise, really, but we'd rather *Kanaan* was quick and that there was always a lot going on than dedicate large chunks of processor power to drawing and redrawing over-detailed characters. You're only going to kill 'em in the end anyway. They still look pretty good, and our game should run on more people's PCs as well."

CV



ARGONAUT

Argonaut haven't really been big on the PC scene - up until now, that is

1994 *Skyline Attack* is released for the Commodore 64.

1991 *StarGlider*, one of the first 3D computer games, is released to critical acclaim.

1990 *Starfox* is released. It goes on to sell over four million copies.

1994 *Stunt Racer FX* racks up sales of over one million copies.

1995 The BRender-powered *FX Fighter* (PCZ #29, 93%) proves to be one of the first decent beat 'em ups on the PC.

1997 *Croc: Legend Of The Gobos* (PCZ #63, 79%) proves more of a success on the PlayStation than on PC.

Red or dead

BLOOD II: THE CHOSEN

UPDATE

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Monolith
PUBLISHER GT Interactive
WEBSITE www.the-chosen.com
OUT Halloween '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ A *Quake*-clone, maybe, but with four characters to choose from and heaps of weapons and spells, it should offer a more diverse challenge than anything so far.
- ★ *Blood II* is one of the few 3D games utilising a brand new engine.
- ★ Lots of the red stuff.

Be honest now. With games like *Quake II* you have to ask yourself what the most important aspect of the gameplay is. If you think it's killing people, then you might think it slightly disappointing in one area in particular – the blood flow; or rather the lack of it. You don't get great arcs of claret shooting all over the place like you do in *Blood II*; shoot some inept grunt with a chain gun

and all you see are a few spots of blood. The only really satisfying weapon is the rail-gun – a perfect example of instant gratification. It takes a small portion of luck and a near-perfect execution of timing, but there's nothing quite like railing an enemy, especially in multiplayer deathmatches.

The difference with *Blood II* is that no matter which weapon you care to

“It seems that designers Monolith have got most of the creatures doing things that past games could only dream of”

use, there's an instant reward when you start drilling someone with shots. Blood shoots all over the place. It rolls onto the floor, spurts onto the walls; you even gets bits of brain in your hair. Well not quite that last part, but you get where I'm coming from.

The version of *Blood II* we managed to get our grubby hands on is pre-alpha. For those to whom the

term means jack shit, consider it somewhere between a series of screenshots and an actual game; a bit like the final version of *Frontier: First Encounters*. You can just about play the damn thing for five minutes before it splutters back to Windows or locks up altogether. Textures

with glorious blood-soaked deaths.

Like the first game, *Blood II* looks like it's going to be bloody – just like *Quake II* quakes, and the fact that *Unreal* isn't particularly, well, real.

WHERE'S THE CHEESE?

Even though many of the AI routines have yet to be incorporated into a playable version of the game, it seems that designers Monolith have got most of the creatures doing things that past games could only dream of. Soul-Drudges, or zombies, adopt a simple find-and-feast nature, while the agile Shikari hunt in packs and only attack when hungry or when their source of sustenance is

threatened. More intelligent foe use different weapons

and will run, jump and duck depending on the situation they find themselves in.

The worrying thing about *Blood II* though – and this is a personal gripe – is that Monolith have decided to dump the cheesy nature of the original in favour of darker levels full of brooding menace. No longer can you enjoy Caleb's one-liners, or perhaps the over-the-top screams of fat blokes who lose their heads. Even at this late stage it might not be too late for them to slip in a few gags, but it is a worry nonetheless.

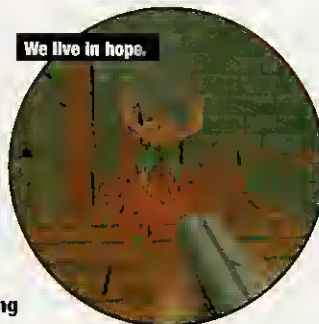
THE ORIGINAL BLOOD IS ABOUT TO BE BETTERED

With almost every software developer in the universe either working on a 3D shooter or planning to do so in the near future, *Blood II* will have to pull something special out of the bag if it wants to get noticed. What we really need is a 3D game that gives us more than just an excuse to wander around shooting everything that moves.

So what have Monolith got on the burner? Well, let us point you in the direction of *Blood 1* (PCZ #53, 84%), which proved beyond doubt that they have more than a few tricks up their collective creative sleeve. And it's for exactly this reason that we believe they'll pull it off a second time and send us all into blood-soaked ecstasy with the sequel. One thing's for sure: they couldn't have timed the release better. The only real contender that we know of for the 3D crown in the near future is *SiN*, although rumours that *Half-life* is imminent will be cause for concern for the creators of both *Blood II* and *SiN*.

Tune in next month when we'll be pitching both these titles against each other and telling you which one is more worthy of your hard-earned cash.

We live in hope.

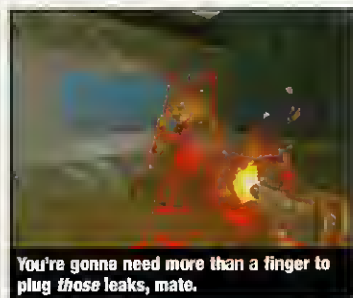




Caleb gets humiliated in multiplayer mode.



Another Saturday night on the Northern Line.



You're gonna need more than a finger to plug those leaks, mate.



The LithTech engine may well prove to be one of the best 3D engines out there.



Jesus, these guys are pissing blood!

All that aside, what is there to look forward to? Well, quite a bit, really. We've promised 21 weapons, most of which will have dual modes. The assault rifle, a formidable enough weapon on its own, comes with an underslung grenade launcher which makes a satisfying thwop when fired. (Notable for its absence from the version of the game we played was the tesla cannon.) Then there are the decapitator and the microwave gun, which sound obvious in their effects, but we can't wait to see them.

There's also a choice of four characters, each with varying abilities and choice of weapons – which bodes well for multiplayer bloodbaths. While on the subject of deathmatching, there will be 'humiliation kills'. What these are we can only guess at right now, but they sound very promising.

With a bit of luck we should be able to bring you a review next issue (on sale Wednesday 21 October). Whether the game can stand up to the likes of *Quake II* or *Klingon* remains to be seen. It may not be enough to take the 3D crown, but it should have enough subtle differences to secure a healthy fan base. We'll see. [E]

IS THAT AN UZI IN YOUR POCKET OR...

The weapons... so far



Mac-20
Your regular bullet-spitting Uzi. Highly inaccurate, but with a rate of fire that should make it pretty effective at close quarters in a crowded room.
Dual mode: even faster rate of fire.



Jackhammer
This is effectively a single-barrelled shotgun, but it packs a punch, especially at medium range. It also has a decent rate of fire.
Dual mode: semi-automatic.



Car-15
More accurate than the Mac-20, this assault rifle is a good all-rounder as it has a formidable firing rate and is good at long range.
Dual mode: an underslung grenade launcher can be brought into play.



Sawn-off shotgun
Ouch! Caleb's weapon of choice is this faithful old pellet-pounder. It's nearly useless at long range, but can mess up anyone's face pretty bad if you get close enough.
Dual mode: fires both barrels at once.



Beretta 92F
No game would be complete without this bog-standard peashooter as part of its arsenal. This handy sidearm may look weedy, but it can be pretty useful against those fleshy human targets.
Dual mode: semi-automatic.



.50 BMG
A sniper rifle with a serious kick, it can kill with one well-placed shot and should be pretty useful at changing the scenery. Slow reloading time.
Dual mode: telescopic.

OTHER WEAPONS

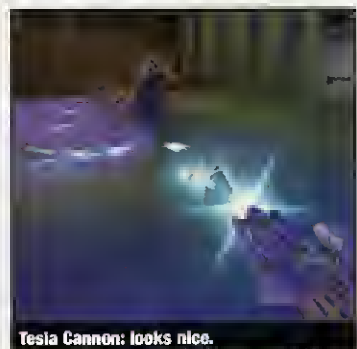
Flayer – A magical weapon that shoots out small hooks on chains that tear flesh from its victims.

Tesla Cannon – Shoots electrical energy that is conducted through a group of enemies, charring their flesh.

Decapitator – Does exactly what it says on the tin. And then some.

Microwave gun – Just wait a while until the blood begins to boil, then...

Voodoo doll – Whoever thought a small cuddly doll and a pin could do so much damage?



Tesla Cannon: looks nice.

Closet Leicester City fan Corvus makes good use of the Hell Staff.



Corvus starts with the Sword Staff, but his weapons get better as the game unfolds.

Caught inside a zombie 'circle jerk'. The Ring Of Repulsion could be your only saviour here.

It's time to think differently. It's HERETIC II

Being a heretic himself, **Paul Mallinson** feels a certain empathy

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Raven Software
PUBLISHER Activision
WEBSITE www.activision.com
OUT September '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ It uses the enhanced *Quake II* engine
- ★ High degree of character control
- ★ Amazing magical special effects
- ★ Indoor and outdoor levels

The computer gaming world has come on somewhat since Raven Software first unveiled their fighting fantasy first-person classic *Heretic* (PCZ #25, 78%)

way back in 1995. iD's *Doom* engine was all the rage at the time, and *Heretic* utilised it successfully, mixing fast-paced combat with simple puzzles and a sense of humour. In 1998, however, things are done a little bit differently, and expectations are rather higher; enter the *Quake II* engine...

iD's versatile and powerful 'world builder' – arguably the best 3D system in the whole world – is being introduced in order to dust the cobwebs off this series and bring it back to life late '90s-style. Early indications show this to be a good thing. This time around, Raven will

have the benefit of coloured lighting, complex geometry, transparency effects, rotating brushes and all that malarkey. They are also working some of their own effects into the code too, such as volumetric fogging, lens flare and heat hazing, all of which should really give *Unreal* (PCZ #65, 93%) a run for its money in the looks department.

The fundamental difference between *Heretic II* and its prequel, though, is the change of viewpoint from first-person to third. Corvus, the game's central character, is now presented before you in lavish polygonal detail. He poses, breathes, swats flies on the back of his neck, throws spells and fires arrows in a convincing and confident manner. The camera free-floats behind him to give a wider view.

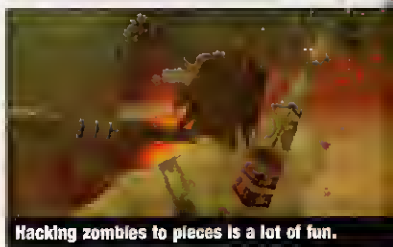
As before, gameplay is mostly action-oriented. Weapons are divided into two different categories: offensive weapons and magic, and defensive magic. Starting on the offensive side: the Sword Staff is the base, ammo-less weapon in Corvus' ever-growing arsenal; and being a very supple kind of pointy-eared being he can also use it to pole vault greater distances as well. The Flying Fist is a basic fireball spell with which Corvus also starts the game. Weapons such as the Hell Staff, Magic Missile,

Red Rain Bow and Sphere of Annihilation come into his possession as the story unfolds (and as the enemies get tougher).

On the defensive side: the Ring of Repulsion, Meteor Barrier, Morph Ovum (which turns enemies into defenceless farmyard animals) and a handy teleport are all available. Even at this early stage of development the graphical effects created by some of these spells are astounding, the action looking something like a New Year firework display on occasion. But then that's the world of night and magic for you.

The *Quake*-style control system has been enhanced so that Corvus can leap, twirl, roll and sprint his way around the landscape in a convincing fashion, and artificial intelligence routines also help him discern whether or not a route is passable. At the moment, Raven are fine-tuning his movement so that when you play, it will feel completely intuitive.

When it comes down to it, *Heretic II* will be action all the way; indoor and outdoor levels chock-full of hideous monsters, each with the ability to track you down over a large distance and kick your head in without mercy. There'll also be rock-hard end-of-level bad guys to fight off too. Wispy-tached, stat-obsessed, RPG freaks take note. **PCZ**



Hacking zombies to pieces is a lot of fun.

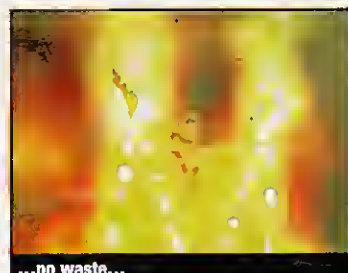
WALKTHROUGH

THIRD-DEGREE BURNS

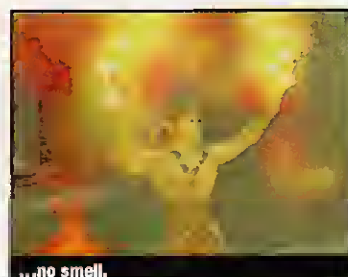
How to light your farts magically in three easy steps



Natural gas: no noise...



...no waste...



...no smell.

Beam us up, it's...



As well as a massive single-player campaign, there's support for up to five players via a network, direct connect, modem and hotseat.

UPDATE

STAR TREK: TNG - BIRTH OF THE FEDERATION

We've waited a long time for the first *Star Trek* strategy game. **Jeremy Wells** ponders whether to boldly go or stay at home watching *Star Trek* re-runs

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER MicroProse US
PUBLISHER MicroProse
WEBSITE www.microprose.com
OUT November '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- It's the first *Star Trek* TNG strategy game
- It uses a reworked version of the *Falcon 4.0* engine (!) to display the combat
- It mixes *Civ*-style exploration with grand-scale turn-based combat
- With trillions of planets to explore and five alliances to control, it could take forever to complete

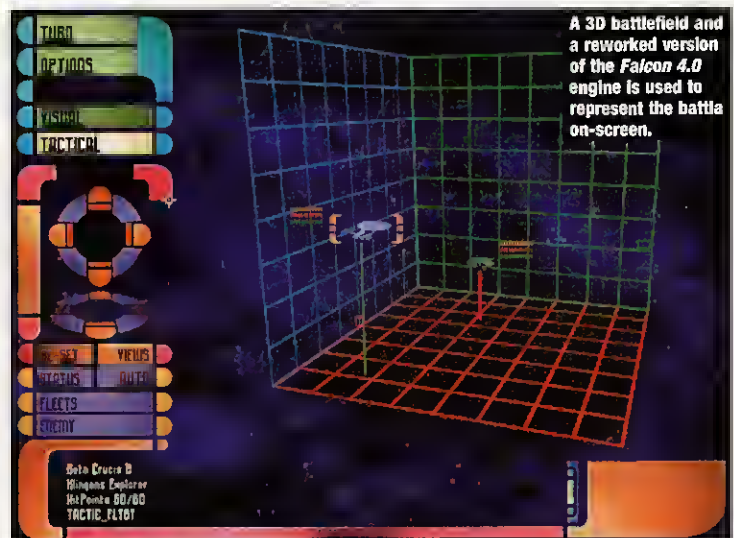
We first saw *Birth Of The Federation* some months ago, when it was obvious that this was a game that had major potential. Not only because it had a *Star Trek: The Next Generation* licence, but also because it was essentially from the same stable as *Civilization II* (PCZ #36, 90%) and *Master Of Orion II* (PCZ #45, 93%).

Although it's not exactly what you'd call *Civ* in space, *BOTF* is similar in that it blends resource management with turn-based combat and diplomacy, and wraps it up within the massive

Star Trek: Next Generation universe. In a nutshell, you get to control one of the five major alliances – Federation, Klingon, Romulan, Ferengi or Cardassian – each with their own particular strengths and weaknesses, and go off and colonise the galaxy.

Of course, it's not just a case of sticking your flag into a planet and then moving on. Not only do you have to manage your own resources, economies and trade routes, but you also have to develop relationships with the 30-odd different races, each with their own traits and individual agendas, if you want to succeed in expanding your empire. As much emphasis is placed on your ability to successfully seek out new worlds, develop or acquire new technology, and your diplomacy as it is on kicking cosmic arse. And when the time comes that you are forced to use might, you'll be wise to remember that success on the battlefield has as much to do with how you prepare as it does with your firepower.

With this in mind, the turn-based combat in *BOTF* is focused on how you construct, maintain and refit your Starship fleet as much as it is on your ability to move your mouse. Engage a potential enemy at anything but full



strength and you'll be lucky to get half your fleet home alive. In this respect, if the likes of *C&C* are for platoon leaders, then *BOTF* is aimed at the Generals out there who like to see the bigger picture. If you want to, you can prepare your fleet and allow the CPU artificial intelligence to fight the battle for you while you watch. You can, of course, intervene at any point, but this 'sit back and watch' feature only emphasises the fact that, in true

Next Generation fashion, *BOTF* is not about combat, war and killing, but exploration, diplomacy and tact.

Some will balk at *BOTF*'s turn-based combat, while others will fail to appreciate the complexities of the *Star Trek* universe. However, if you're a fan of *Civ* or *Master Of Orion*, and if you've ever watched an episode of *The Next Generation*, you could easily find yourself becoming totally absorbed by *Birth Of The Federation*. **PW**



It may look a little daunting, but the intuitive, mouse-driven interface and skill levels mean it's not difficult to get into.



The user-configurable options enable a game to last for hours or days; multiplayer games can be time-based or continuous.



Much of the emphasis in *Birth Of The Federation* is on exploration, technology development and diplomacy.



...Preparation for battle is also very important, and you can even sit back and watch the AI fight your battles for you.

Calm down, calm down, calm down. Take...

SETTLERS III



Walk like an Egyptian, with pyramids and everything.



The Asian community hard at work: cue predictable corner shop and curry house references.

Settlers bring express relief. As does **Steve Hill**

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Blue Byte
PUBLISHER Blue Byte
WEBSITE www.bluebyte.com
OUT Fourth quarter of '98

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Three distinctive races
- ★ Numerous battle options
- ★ Multiplayer action
- ★ Loads more stuff

Nothing to do with the popular indigestion treatment – and everything to do with real time strategic simulation in the middle ages – *Settlers III* is of course the latest instalment of the million-selling series. For

newcomers to the wonderful and frightening world of PC games, it's a god sim in which you control the full cycle of your civilisation's evolution, from the initial planning and building of its infrastructure, to the full-blooded conflict of tribe against tribe in the quest to expand your power and domination. A natural progression

then, encompassing all facets of human development and naturally leading to bloody conflict. You can't simply take to your neighbours with a blunt stick though, and before starting any warring you'll first need to create a sustainable economy from the interdependent activities of agriculture, industry and trading.

For those who require a story to justify wasting hours of their life, the tale behind *Settlers III* is clearly the work of a madman, but nevertheless goes thus: The gods Jupiter, Horus

and Ch'ih-Yu (of Rome, Egypt and Asia respectively) have unfortunately lost some of their shape, due to the gluttony that comes with centuries of reigning. During one of their parties, the top god orders them to change their ways and grants them one last chance to straighten up. For the very last time, each of them may nominate a member of their race as the leader for a new beginning.

Of course, what this means is that the game features three different campaigns: Roman, Egyptian, and Asian. Naturally, the different races will have varying characteristics and skills, so expect the Romans to be handy at roads, the Egyptians to knock up the odd pyramid and the Asians to be the victims of outdated cheery racism. Due to their unique physical features, clothing, housing and so forth, the existence of distinct races lends itself perfectly to multiplayer tomfoolery, and the game will of course support all manner of Internet-compatible shenanigans.

Torsten Hess, project leader on the game, explains the thinking behind this: "The multiplayer and online features are by far the ones that fans of *Settlers* requested most. And from the very beginning we attached a great deal of importance to the online playability in developing the concept for *Settlers III*. It's not one of those games where a couple of multiplayer levels are thrown in,

regardless of whether or not it fits in with the character of the game." Angry loners need not despair though, as the game still promises plenty of treats for the single

player. As Torsten says: "Even after weeks and weeks of play there is always something new to discover, not to mention acts of divine intervention which bring a little chaos into the lives of the Settlers now and again. It's really what we've been saying from the very beginning – the Settlers are the same as ever, but everything looks even better and is more exciting than ever." [E]

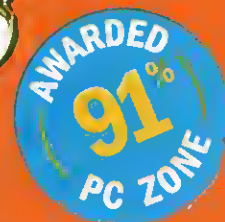
“The tale behind *Settlers III* is clearly the work of a madman”



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Discovery consists of seeing

what everybody has seen

and thinking

what nobody has thought.

Albert Szent-Györgyi



The Future is in Your Hands

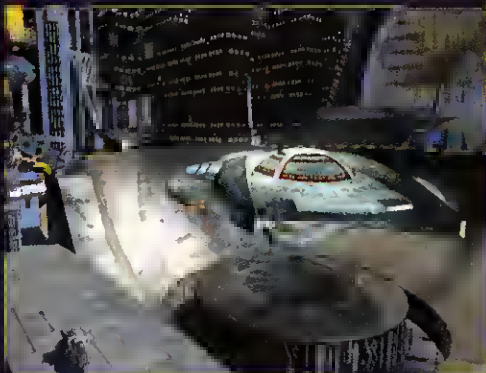
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Discover Who Among Your Friends Will Rule

Go head-to-head in multiplayer world-building. But remember – in war, even friends can become enemies. A nanovirus you release in one opponent's city may spread to others, leading you into a war with an unintended party.





CIVILIZATION

CALL TO POWER™

THE RISE OF THE ROBOTS

Forget Marines, 'Mechs are now the coolest ingredient for the latest action and strategy games. Jeremy Wells looks at four of the hottest forthcoming robot releases and asks "But what's wrong with tanks?"

Just like the popular music combo the Wallflowers, Bud Light beer and Tommy Hilfiger, the whole 'Mech thing is a lot more popular in the United States than it is over here. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to say they just can't get enough of it. The popularity of Activision's *MechWarrior* and *MechWarrior 2* in the good ole US of A is quite astounding — combined sales of both games allegedly left id's *Quake II* lagging behind and Activision were obviously a trifle miffed to lose the lucrative *MechWarrior* licence to rival publishers MicroProse.

"Together with the FASA-created BattleTech science-fiction universe in which *MechWarrior III* takes place, the *MechWarrior* brand has generated more than \$200 million in worldwide sales," says product manager Geraldine Burke. "We're delighted to be working so closely with the creators of one of the most important and recognised brands in the world of science fiction and computer gaming."

"In the States, they can't get enough of the whole 'Mech thing. Combined US sales of Activision's *MechWarrior* and *MechWarrior 2* allegedly left *Quake II* lagging behind"

But it ain't over yet. After releasing their own version of mini-'Mech warfare under the guise of *Heavy Gear*, Activision are about to strike back at the forthcoming *MechWarrior III* with *Heavy Gear 2*. And they're not alone. The third instalment in the ever-popular *Earthsiege* series from publishers Cendant, now known as

Starsiege, is also striding over the horizon, and it's joined by *Slave Zero* from Electronic Arts and *Shogo: Mobile Armour Division* from Blood boys Monolith. Suddenly, the whole games industry has gone 'Mech crazy.

Even RTS supremos Westwood are getting in on the act. One of the

many things that brought whoops of delight from the American media when details of Westwood's much-hyped *Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun* were released was that it would feature new 'Mech-style units. "The Earth is now a hostile planet, and troops need suits to survive," explains the game's producer Erik Yeo.

Of course, this has got nothing to do with Westwood cashing in on the insatiable 'Mech craze, has it? "They give you a lot of

MECHWARRIOR III

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Zipper Interactive
PUBLISHER MicroProse
WEBSITE www.microprose.com
OUT March '99

THE HYPE

- ★ The licence may have changed hands, but few 'Mech-heads will be able to resist the pull of the original *MechWarrior* games.
- ★ MicroProse are working very closely with FASA Interactive, the people responsible for creating the *BattleTech* universe, to ensure the game remains true to their massively popular *MechWarrior* world.
- ★ The developers have really gone to town on the terrain, and thanks to 3D acceleration and a brand-new 3D game engine it's anything but flat.
- ★ You're able to stomp your way over

cliffs, river beds and sprawling urban developments.

- ★ The man himself, Jordan Weisman (see The Man Who Started It All panel on page 75), is the inspiration for many of the new 'Mechs, weapons and missions. True *MechWarrior* fans should not be disappointed.

THE REALITY

MechWarrior III has had a troubled development to say the least, with various team personnel changes somewhat prolonging development time. Early glimpses of the new 3D engine have been encouraging, although the increased detail of the landscapes, coupled with a progressive perspective, mean that the frame rate is struggling to get into double figures.

That said, it's still very early days (the game isn't due for release until

spring next year), and the code is yet to be optimised for speed.

From what we've seen so far it looks like being the best *MechWarrior* game yet, but then it's got an awful lot to live up to.



MechWarrior 3 is undoubtedly the best-looking 'Mech game in the series so far.

The landscapes are now far from flat, and sport rocky ravines, dried out river beds and urban sprawl.

flexibility," maintains Yeo. "We've tried to create new environments in *Tiberian Sun* which justify the introduction of new units. The weather and conditions are now an important part of the gameplay. Ion storms now sweep across the globe, and they not only affect how the game looks and feels, but also how it plays.

"The GDI now dominate the air, whereas NOD have literally gone underground, they're subterranean. They've developed 'Mechs out of necessity, because they're forced to adopt guerrilla tactics to survive. 'Mechs are good at that type of combat – they're good at raiding a base and getting out quick. Of course, this development in the Earth's environment has allowed us to develop some really cool units. Our 'Mech units are definitely some of the coolest units in the game."

THE JOY OF 'MECHS

There's no doubt that 'Mechs are cool. However, their potential as effective mobile assault 'vehicles' is not beyond doubt. First of all, what happens if they fall over? Most traditional 'Mech designs are extremely tall and top-heavy – not exactly a recipe for stability, is it? In contrast, modern-day battle tanks are designed to have a low centre of gravity and be of a limited stature, which enables them to use cover more effectively and traverse difficult terrain without toppling.

Of course, the real argument for 'Mechs over tanks is that they can negotiate more difficult terrain, because they can effectively step over or even climb over the more challenging obstacles that get in their way. Indeed, this is one argument for them being so tall, but it does raise some other issues. Think back to when you last played a game with 'Mechs in it and try and recall the last time you encountered something – be it a jagged hillock or a smoking pile of rubble – that your 'Mech could get over but a tank couldn't? Tricky, isn't it? Add to this the fact that, to date, most 'Mech games have been based within environments that are flatter than the proverbial pancake and you begin to ask yourself: why bother with 'Mechs at all?

Okay, they look cool, but aren't they just a bit bulky and cumbersome? In most situations surely a nifty hover-tank would be much more practical? And why can't they duck? One of the most useful features a 'Mech could have would be the facility to pop up over the edge of a bomb crater, let rip with both barrels and then duck down under cover again. After all, this is what makes combat helicopters so effective.

BENDING THE KNEES AND THE RULES

Thankfully, most game developers have decided to bend the rules to suit their own ends. In Monolith's *Shogo: MAD*, the MCA (Mobile Combat Armour) ➔



HEAVY GEAR 2

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Activision
PUBLISHER Activision
WEBSITE www.activision.com
OUT Winter '98

THE HYPE

- ★ Activision may have lost the *MechWarrior* licence, but they have proven expertise in developing games of this ilk.
- ★ The development process isn't hindered by third-party involvement. Unlike the *MechWarrior* games, the 'Mechs, weaponry and mission structure of *Heavy Gear 2* can look and behave however the developers want them to.
- ★ The sequel sports a rather nifty new 3D game engine and is fully optimised to take advantage of the latest 3D accelerator technology.
- ★ Smaller 'Mechs will hopefully mean more mobile and agile units that can twist and turn and take greater advantage of the terrain. Get ready for some great one-on-one gunfights.

THE REALITY

The original *Heavy Gear* (PCZ # 59, 70%) didn't exactly set the world on fire when it was released last year. The landscapes were flat and uninspiring, as were the 'Mechs (or Gears, if you must) – some even had wheels, which meant that *Heavy Gear* was essentially a mini-'Mech game on roller skates. Early indications suggest that the sequel has more to offer the discerning 'Mech-head. Let's face it: it can't really get much worse.





units may be 30 feet tall, but they are just as agile as people, and can run, jump, duck and even swim just like your average busty, hot pants-wearing heroine or unshaven marine. Gamers who are used to the cumbersome *MechWarrior* Heavy Gear style of play are in for a big

surprise. *Shogo* plays more like *Doom* than *Quake* as far as speed of movement is concerned, and there are four different Mecha to choose from, each with its own particular strengths, weaknesses and levels of mobility. Each Mecha can also transform into a vehicle, Robotech-style, for even greater flexibility. It would seem that the guys at Monolith have thought of everything.

MechWarrior fans are also in for a bit of a re-education as far as the third game in the series is concerned. Gone

are the barren landscapes, and in come rocky crevices, river beds and rough urban sprawls. The 'Mechs look better than ever, though the emphasis is still as much on armour and ridiculously destructive weaponry than on mobility.

Heavy Gear II is more of a halfway house in that the units are generally smaller and therefore quicker and

obstacle-packed landscapes means that the scenarios will play to the 'Mechs' strengths. Mini-'Mechs are best suited to built-up, urban warfare, after all.

Starsiege is again following the familiar territory that was established by *Earthsiege I* and *II*, though the universe has been expanded to accommodate more varied units and terrain types. Like the original *MechWarrior* games, the emphasis is on powerful, stomping, metallic monsters of destruction, though smaller, more manoeuvrable units will be available, as will more 'traditional' battle tanks and airborne units.

So who will win the battle of the 'bots? Well, one thing's for sure: come Christmas we'll be spoilt for choice as rival developers attempt to outdo the opposition. Which can only be a good thing for 'Mech fans big and small. **PCZ**

“So who will win the battle of the 'bots? Come Christmas we'll be spoilt for choice as developers attempt to outdo each other”

more manoeuvrable. The first game in the spin-off series sported 'Mechs with wheels, which rather turned the whole 'Mech *raison d'être* on its head – why not just have tanks? Hopefully, the addition of more challenging,

SHOGO: MOBILE ARMOUR DIVISION

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Monolith
PUBLISHER Microdis
WEBSITE www.lith.com
OUT November '98

THE HYPE

★ Developers Monolith are new to the world of 'Mechs, but they've proved themselves to be pretty able at producing 3D action games – take *Blood* (PCZ # 53, 84%), for example.

★ *Shogo* uses the much-hyped LithTech 3D game engine (as does *Blood II*), which boasts numerous innovative graphical effects and super-fast scaleable 3D technology.

★ About half the missions take place in the armoured MCAs (30-foot 'Mechs) that also transform into vehicles. The rest of the time, you're on foot, with an awesome armoury at your fingertips. There are four different 'Mechs (or Mecha, as they

call them) to pilot, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. All are highly mobile.

★ The fact that the 'Mechs are highly mobile and impressively toolled up means that we can expect some pretty slick *Quake*-style combat coupled with *MechWarrior*-style strategy and firepower. Well, that's the plan, anyway.

THE REALITY

Shogo sounds great, but could it just be another *Quake* clone in 'Mech clothing? The 3D game engine is technically impressive, but is it really suited to throwing around sprawling 3D landscapes? 'Mechs are supposed to be comparatively slow, powerful and not particularly agile – will *Shogo* really feel like a 'Mech game or just another first-person shooter? This could be a tricky one for 'Mech fans to get to grips with.



Around half the missions involve running around in an oversized 'Mecha'.



The LithTech engine is pretty impressive and stands up well against other 3D engines.



The 'Mecha' in *Shogo* are the most agile, so expect some typical *Quake* style gameplay.

THE MAN WHO STARTED IT ALL – JORDAN WEISMAN



ground for great ideas. With the succession states in Rome as a template, we created our setting for the BattleTech universe.

PCZ So why large walking tanks?

Aren't wheels better?

JORDAN I believe by virtue of their vaguely human shape that they become a kind of natural extension of your power. They become kind of a personification of what you want your actions to carry. The weight and the power of those actions, as you climb up into this thing, strap in, put on a helmet – it becomes your body. You feel its power, making you want to go step on your high school, whip out your PPC, or fire across town at the bank that refused you a house loan. It is this central theme of arrogant power that makes 'Mechs so appealing.

In essence, a BattleMech is a really silly vehicle in many ways. In a real battlefield, your whole goal is to get low to the ground to avoid death. Standing four storeys tall on a battlefield would be a silly thing to do. But that is part of their power. It's part of their arrogance – standing up, beckoning to all challengers that it can take it and dish it out.

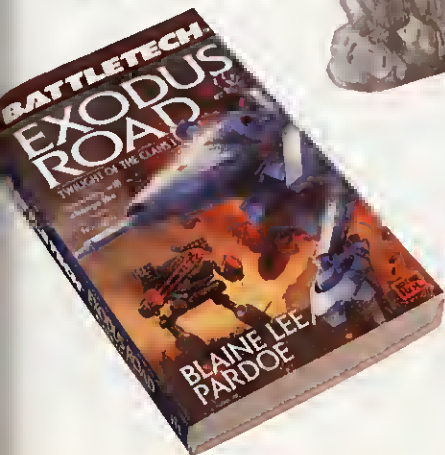
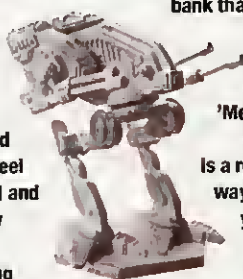
The rationale for a walking vehicle is that there is no terrain it can't eventually conquer, as opposed to track- or wheel-based vehicles that can easily be impeded.

It's not just about computer games; it's a way of life for millions. Meet the man behind the 'Mech...

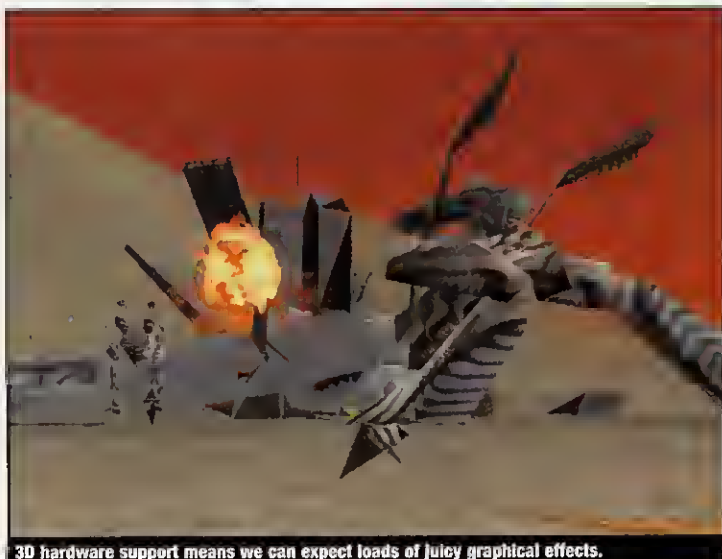
PCZ How did the whole BattleTech thing begin?

JORDAN BattleTech first came visually, as most things that I design do. I saw these model kits from a Japan giant robot series from Macross at a hobby show. I thought the kits had incredibly dynamic and strong visuals, so I contacted the people who owned the licences and said: "Look, the story is not really something I think is going to be well-received here." It had a very Asian feel in the way it is established and set up, but I thought a very different story could be written around these strong dynamic visual elements about these giant walking tanks. And so we worked out a deal.

I wrote a story of endless warfare with more of a western sensibility. Driven by the petty whims of dictators, this universe allowed for an environment in a constant state of war. The idea was primarily based on all the many succession wars of Rome. I have always believed that history is the most fertile



Starsiege is arguably the best-looking game of the quartet.



3D hardware support means we can expect loads of juicy graphical effects.

STARSIEGE

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Dynamix
PUBLISHER Cendant Software
WEBSITE www.starsiege.com
OUT Winter '98

THE HYPE

★ *Starsiege* was originally known as *Earthsiege 3*, the third game in the popular and compelling *Earthsiege* series (both previous games achieved *PC ZONE* 'Classic' status).
★ In an attempt to compete with the massive *BattleTech*/*MechWarrior* universe, the developers have changed the name and expanded the game world to include two other titles that share the same universe (one a multiplayer version of *Starsiege* known as *Starsiege: Tribes*, the other a real-time strategy game, *Homeworld*).
★ *Starsiege* will have comprehensive Net play and multiplayer options and

will undoubtedly have *Quake*-d out deathmatchers chomping at the bit for a piece of the latest online action.
★ So far, the technology is impressive, as are the game options. You can pilot more than 30 different customisable vehicles, including air-skimmers, tanks and Hercs, and really go to town on how you plan your missions. Check out the playable technology demo for yourself, at www.starsiege.com.

THE REALITY

Like *MechWarrior III*, the third instalment in the *Earthsiege* series is long overdue. The technology demo is comparable with the other 'Mech games that are due to hit the shelves at the same time, and the developers claim it's moved on a fair bit since the demo was stuck on the Net.

Let's hope it's worth the wait.



The in-game HERCs look pretty awesome.



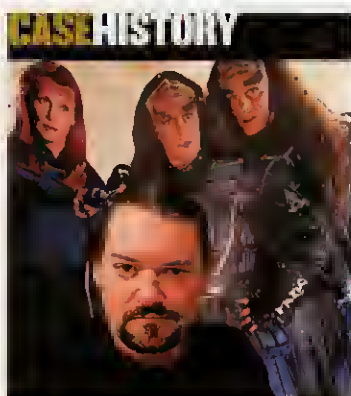
Starsiege should be great multiplayer.

OBSESSED
WITH

STAR

Wearing bizarre clothes, swearing in a language hardly anyone understands, abusing Arabs... It's all in a day's work for a *Star Trek*-obsessed Klingon

★ WORDS Adam Phillips



#5 THE KLINGON

NAME Noleth (aka Nick Oakley)

AGE 32

LOCATION London

OCCUPATION Manager of a game store in Putney; is also reading for a PhD in archaeology

OBSESSION All things *Star Trek*, with a penchant for Klingon culture

CONDITION BEGAN As a child, when he was subjected to the original *Star Trek* series by his mum

HISTORY OF CONDITION Adored the first *Trek* movie, and was then hooked by the arrival of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, in particular by Klingons and Lt Worf. Subsequently went along to Trekkie haunt Page's Bar in Westminster, London, where he met fellow fans. Bought a Klingon uniform and has never looked back

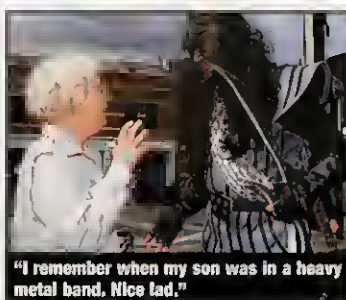
OUTLOOK Fuelled by the continued success of the *Star Trek* franchise and a constant influx of new *Star Trek* games, Nick would rather be the captain of a Klingon Warbird than a resident of planet Earth

It's just so damn... nice. Sit down and watch *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and it's like watching the universe's most ideal marriage guidance session, where any arguments or conflicts are briskly swept away with a quick hug and dose of healthy moralising at the end of each episode. It's the sci-fi equivalent of *The Good Life*.

If the crew of the Enterprise worked in a real office, they'd be the ones with the clean desks, a pot of decaf coffee, and a strict no-smoking policy. And as for casual sex, heavy drinking, swearing and talking about the size of the receptionist's tits (or the size of the delivery boy's lunchbox, girls), they'd rather slam their privates in a door than stoop to such a base level.

Star Trek haters - think about it: what a joy it would be to see Jean-Luc Picard smoking a spliff; to witness Data pimping the female crew to the Klingons; and to play a *Star Trek* game where the Prime Directive was flushed down the nearest black hole, and mutilation and genetic experimentation were met with admiration and promotion.

But let's be frank here: one of the core reasons for *Star Trek*'s massive appeal and success over the last three decades can be put down to this squeaky-clean, feel-good image. "It's a positive look at the future," muses Nick Oakley, *Star Trek* fan and part-time Klingon. "Rather than saying: 'In 1999 we're all going to die in a big bang', or believing that global warming will get so bad that the Earth will end up as a small cinder floating round the sun."



"I remember when my son was in a heavy metal band. Nice lad."

He's got a valid point. With the movie, TV and game worlds regularly substituting the words 'future vision' with 'hell' (as illustrated by classics from films like *Bladerunner* and *Alien*, to games such as *Syndicate Wars* and *Quake II*), *Star Trek*'s 'take the moral high ground and turn to violence as a last resort' approach still makes for a refreshing change.

Judging by the continual flow of *Star Trek*-based titles, gamers would appear to agree. From 1980's titles for the Atari ST and the Amiga, to the latest pant-swinging PC releases such as *Klingon: Honour Guard* (PCZ #68,

"My girlfriend once asked me if I would do it to her wearing a Klingon headpiece... The Klingon look is quite a powerful thing - very virile, very testosterone-fuelled"

NICK OAKLEY (AKA NOLETH)

94%), the *Star Trek* scene remains immensely popular among gamers (see preview of *Star Trek: Birth Of The Federation* on page 67).

"Games offer a chance to totally immerse yourself in the *Star Trek* universe," offers Nick. "They are another part of the whole phenomenon - you can watch the show, and then play it. Games give people the chance to get involved without having to dress up."

The *Star Trek* universe, as well as being a sacred cash cow for the likes of MicroProse and Interplay, also offers a wide range of gaming styles.

From space combat games (*Starfleet Academy* - PCZ #56, 87%) and point-'n'-click adventures (*A Final Unity* - PCZ #27, 94%), to first-person shoot 'em ups (*Klingon: Honour Guard*), the scope is vast and unrestricted; unlike the *Quakes* and *Command & Conquers* of this world.

BEAM ME UP

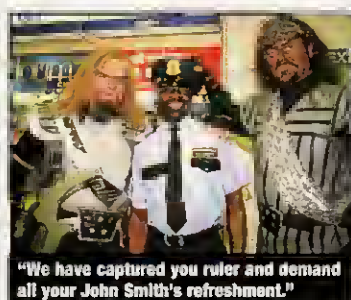
Nick is so enamoured with this diversity that he owns every title. But his passion for all things *Star Trek* doesn't stop there. He also has posters, mirrors, signed memorabilia, complete collections of all *ST:TNG* and *Voyager* episodes, T-shirts, and, of course, the obligatory mug.

The icing on the cake though is his six uniforms, full Klingon make-up and weaponry. Indeed, so successful is his rendition of a Klingon that he was recently chosen to attend the launch of *Klingon: Honour Guard*. While there, he and four others in full costume cursed and swore in Klingon (see 'You smell...' panel on page 78) at those attending - from the head honchos of MicroProse to the editorial bods from the *Daily Star*.

So how do people take to his Klingon character? Nick offers the following example: "We were staying at a hotel for a convention, and one of my mates mistook someone dressed in Arabian clothes for a *Star Trek* character. So he let fly in Klingon and we all joined in. There we were, grabbing at this guy, putting our arms round him and calling him human scum, until we realised that he was a real Arab in traditional costume. We think it was actually one of the Al Fayed family. Fortunately, he, his wife and his



The man who fell to Earth: Noleth interfaces with inhabitants of London.



"We have captured your ruler and demand all your John Smith's refreshment."

TREK

☎ "My name is Noreth, right? *Noreth!* Anyone who calls me Nick will get this rammed up his pipe!"



"Straggly at the back, and salt 'n' vinegar on the front bit, please."



"Arsenal? Sngrpl 9lgngrtk Warriors have the best back four this side of Uranus."



Noleth finds that interplanetary travellers are a magnet for groupies.



"Christ, what do you Klingons eat?! Your fart smells absolutely *disgusting!*"



"I say what you gonna look like with a Ginster's on your head..."



Lethal weapons: what every Klingon should have in his arsenal.

OH HOW WE LAUGHED

Clean and sober *Star Trek* meets 'laddism' in that old dull-as-dishwater pastime, the drinking game. Some examples...

Watch an episode and have a drink when...

- ...the ship's bridge is hit and everyone falls out of their chairs.
- ...a mention of or reference to Shakespeare is made.
- ...someone scolds or lectures a superior being.
- ...homosexual undertones are spotted in the dialogue or situations. (Musta missed that episode - Ed.)

✪ For more details, visit <http://planetofthegeeks.com/trek/beertrek/>. Alternatively, go to the nearest pub and make conversation.

"YOU SMELL LIKE A LABRADOR'S PRIVATE PARTS..."

One of the most OTT developments in the Earth-bound *Star Trek* community has been the creation of a fully-fledged Klingon language

With its own official institute (see Separated At Birth panel on page 79) and dictionary, fans can forget that tailed French O-Level and learn something really useful instead. Like any language though, what everyone really wants to know is how to take the piss with it - Anglo Saxon Insulting boasts some of the most delicious, malicious and filthy phrases on the face of the planet. But can the Klingon language hold its own against such crudities? We asked Nick Oakley to Insult us.

DEJPU' BOGH HOV RUR QABLIJ

Pronounced: dej-poo bokh khov rur kkhahlj

Translation: Your face looks like a collapsed star

Insult factor: 5/10

HAB SOSLI' QUCH

Pronounced: khab SHOSH-II kkhooch

Translation: Your mother has a smooth forehead

Insult factor: 5/10

VEQDUJ 'OH DUJLIJ'E'

Pronounced: vekkh-000J okh 000J-lij-E

Translation: Your ship is a garbage scow

Insult factor: 2/10

TARGHLIJ YAB TIN LAW' NO'LI HOCH YABDU' TIN PUS

Pronounced: targ-lij yab tin LOW NO-II khoch yab00 tin poosh

Translation: Your targ has a bigger brain than all your ancestors put together

Insult factor: N/A

✪ To learn more about the Klingon language, Nick... sorry, Noleth recommends the Okrand's *Klingon Dictionary*, available from all major bookstores such as Waterstones, and specialist shops like Forbidden Planet - 0171 836 4179. Also check out the *Klingon Linguaphone* tapes to perfect your pronunciation.



Noreth is gobsmacked by the Stone Age technology he has to use on Earth to play his *Trek* games.

SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

Forget games, TV shows and movies – the WWW is *Star Trek's* real home

To explore new worlds and frontiers; meet new races/people; and so on and so forth. In idealistic babble, the Net and *Star Trek* share these 'common goals'. While such toss makes most of us flinch as we bravely search out new forms of Pamela Anderson, there is an absurd number of sites dedicated to the *Trek* phenomena, covering everything from scripts and quotations, to online campaigns to 'out' characters in *Deep Space Nine*.

PC ZONE endeavors to explore the *Star Trek* online universe – and not spend five years doing it

WEBSITES

★ www.vol.it/luca/startrek/index.html

The ideal starting point for the *Trek* fan, with everything and anything Trekkie categorised and accessible with links to

mailing lists, fan clubs, role-playing games, conventions... Do you want us to go on?

★ **The Klingon Language Institute**

www.kli.org

Learn Klingon and then join your fellow bad-breathed, unwashed mates at the high-brow Klingon Language Institute. Be sure to read about their Klingon Shakespeare Restoration Project as well.

★ **Star Trek – The Books**

www.silmonsays.com/startrek/

Forget to order your Captain's Weekly Log for 1999? Fear not. This extensive library lists a shedload of publications and details.

★ **The Worf and Oeanna Shrine**

<http://members.aol.com/etobler/shrine.htm>

More obsessive madness in the shape of a homepage dedicated to the love affair between psychic counsellor Troi (with the big hair) and Klingon Worf (with the big forehead).

As well as a blow-by-blow guide to the couple's love in *ST:TNG*, visitors to the site have also submitted stories of their own.

★ **STAR TREK: CONTINUUM**

www.startrek.com/startrek.asp

The official site for the *Star Trek* franchise, with events and info updated on a daily basis. Also features live chats with the cast.

★ **SpockSarah's Warped World**

<http://members.aol.com/spocksarah/index.html>

"Keeping her gaze focused on B'Elanna, Kathryn stripped off her tank top and bra to expose her luscious..." You get the idea.

NEWSGROUPS

★ alt.startrek

★ alt.tv.star-trek.tos

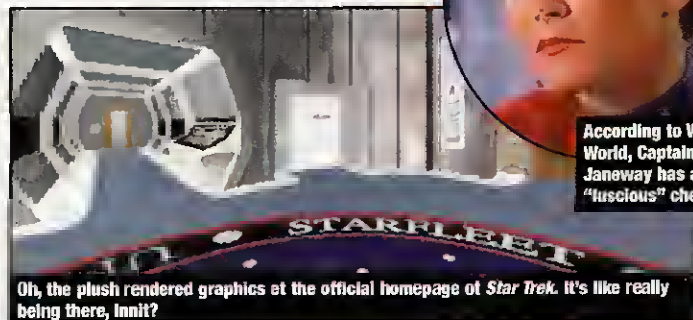
★ alt.startrek.klingon



The love affair between Troi and Worf is obsessed about, analysed and expounded on at their online shrine.



The Captain's Weekly Log: yours for only 12 bucks.



Oh, the plush rendered graphics at the official homepage of *Star Trek*. It's like really being there, innit?

According to Warped World, Captain Janeway has a "luscious" chest.

THE KLINGON SEW-IT-YOURSELF SOCIETY

Wear it like you walk it like you talk it

As well as developing the perfect Klingon dialect, anyone intending to do the full-on *Trek* thang should dump that pair of Levi's and *Deep Space Nine* T-shirt in favour of a fully-fledged costume. Nick made his own out of vinyl, and his headpiece was created by a local artist. As for weaponry, Nick says using good old chipboard can create a convincing mock-up. If you need any help putting your costume and kit together, Nick is more than happy to offer advice – send all queries to scully@easynet.co.uk.

For the lazy ones among you though, there are other less taxing options. Several companies in the US flog their costume wares via the Net (see list below), or if you want to go the whole hog, Hightower Crafts in Wales make a full leather version (including body armour, boots and sleeves) for a mere 800 smackers. Hightower can be reached on 01248 440500, and you'll find their homepage at www.hightower.demon.co.uk/index.htm.

Finally, the likes of Forbidden Planet (0171 836 4179) sell full Klingon headpieces (nose, forehead and hair) for £48.99. Oh, and the official plastic Klingon knife for just £18.99.



US Costume Bods Online:

Next Frontier

<http://rampages.onramp.net/~jreimers/nxtfrnt/>

Clicket

www.clicket.com/clicket/stgallery/stgal.html

Nightmare Factory

www.nightmarefactory.com/stmasks.html#masks

bodyguards found the whole thing rather funny."

While Nick and his mates should count themselves lucky for not having their bollocks carved off with a scimitar, the general consensus among everyday folk is generally less forgiving. As one online source pointed out: "Trekkies need to get a life – especially those weirdoes who get all dressed up."

Do such comments raise the glands on Nick's Klingon headpiece? "No, I ignore people like that and tell them it's my choice," he retorts. "They should come to a convention and see how much fun it is before judging. Of course, if they really annoyed me while I was in costume they'd get a whole hurl of abuse!"

While Nick can take any scathing remarks from the public on the chin, the ultimate litmus test must surely be the ladies – what do they think of his alien cross-dressing?

"My girlfriend Liz loves me dressing up," is his matter-of-fact reply. "She now dresses up as a Klingon too."

All of which begs the

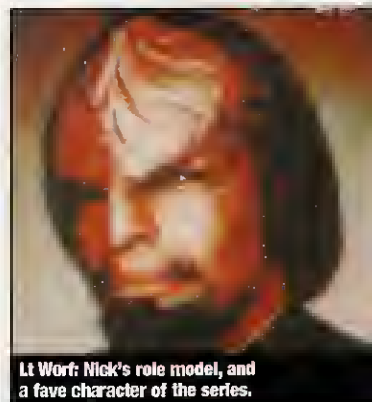
question (If you're a perv – Ed): does dressing up as a Klingon open up the possibilities for intriguing bedroom games? "My girlfriend once asked me if I would do it to her wearing a

“One of my mates mistook someone dressed in Arabian clothes for a *Star Trek* character, so he let fly in Klingon and we all joined in, until we realised he was a real Arab”

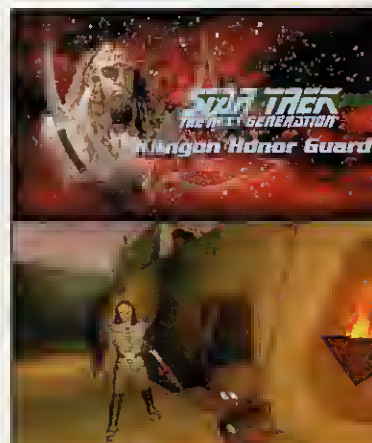
NOLETH OAKLEY (AKA NICK)

Klingon headpiece," Nick chuckles. "She thought it was a real turn-on; she has said that she finds it extremely sexy. The Klingon look is quite a powerful thing – very virile, very testosterone-fueled, very animalistic."

Perhaps it's time to chuck out the Gucci, burn that Armani, and order a Klingon costume and matching headpiece and codpiece. Look out, ladies, the *Star Trek* universe just got dirty. **PCZ**



Lt Worf: Nick's role model, and a fave character of the series.



Klingon: Honour Guard: "Lovely graphics, superb updating and nice lighting. It really captures the Klingon spirit" – Nick Oakley, who can currently be found living in seventh heaven in front of his PC.

Does your pc plod?



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FREEDOM TO FRAG

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FRAG MASTER

JOYSTICKS



Okay, so the new ultra-sleek Frag Master game controller may look more like a prop from a David Cronenberg film than a joystick, but don't let that put you off. Gone are the days of the Kempston Competition Pro, the standard Atari joystick and the Konix Speed King; this is the '90s: the age of the ergonomically designed input device, and 'plain and functional' just won't do any more. So with this in mind, ThrustMaster set about creating the ultimate 3D game controller – and this, they reckon, is it.

The Frag Master is designed specifically to cater for the 3D shoot 'em up crowd, and combines a smooth, sliding action with fingertip button control to enable unprecedented control. In short, it looks cool and feels good.

But, having looked at the picture, you're

probably thinking: "That thing looks scary. I don't trust them on this one." So you'll no doubt want to verify how good it is yourself by winning one in this **PC ZONE** competition – or by splashing out 60 quid at your nearest computer games shop if you don't.

PC ZONE and ThrustMaster have ten Frag Master controllers to give away. Here's what you have to do to win one:

★ **#1: ANSWER THIS QUESTION:**

What is the name of the enemy force in *Quake II* 1033?

★ **#2: DRAW US A PICTURE:**

We want you to design us a game controller to rival the Frag Master,

and we want you to make us laugh. Anything goes, except entries drawn in human blood.

Just answer the question(s) and send them (cut out the panel opposite or photocopy it), along with with *all* the information requested, to the address below

★ Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / Email / Job title / Company name / Age if under 18

★ Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies

★ Are you a current subscriber to **PC ZONE**?

Send your entry to: 'Stick This!' Competition CPCZ9B11A, PC ZONE, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ, UK. (The closing date is Tuesday 20 October 1998.)

★ **Terms and conditions:** Only entries with all the questions completed and received before the closing date will be entered into the prize draw. Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. And all that. Phew!

my first picture

(Use this panel for your 'art', or alternatively a photocopy of it)

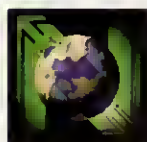
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Minimum system requirements: Windows 95, Pentium 166, 16MB RAM, SVGA
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For further information contact: Cendant Software UK, 2 Beacontree Plaza,
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Impressions

PCZONE REVIEWS

Don't spend a single penny until you've checked out the **ZONE** reviews first

WHERE TO CALL

Having trouble finding any of the games listed in the reviews section of the magazine? Here are the numbers you need to call

Activision 01895 456 7000
 Blue Byte 01604 232200
 BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011
 Core Design 01332 297797
 Cryo 01926 315559
 Crystal Dynamics/Ubisoft 0181 944 9000
 Eidos Interactive 0181 636 3000
 Electronic Arts 01753 549442
 Empire Interactive 0181 343 7337
 Funsoft 01322 292513
 Gremlin Interactive 0114 273 8601
 GT Interactive 0171 258 3791
 Infogrames 0161 827 8000
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 MicroProse 01454 893893
 Microsoft 0345 002000
 Mindscape 01444 246333
 NovaLogic 0171 405 1777
 Ocean 0161 832 6633
 Sierra 0118 920 9100
 Sold Out 0171 721 8767
 Take 2 Interactive 01753 854444
 Telstar 01932 22232
 Virgin 0171 368 2255
 ZBLAC 01626 332233

THE HALL OF SHAME

★ These are the games that we still haven't been sent for review. This means they're either completely crap and the publishers are scared we'll pan them, or their PR machine isn't quite up to full speed. This month's hall of shame comprises...

POWERBOAT RACING Interplay
STREETS OF SIMCITY
 Maxis/EA
LIGHT AND DARKNESS Interplay
BUST-A-MOVE 2 Acclaim
UBIK Cryo

REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST

We at **ZONE** pride ourselves on telling you exactly what we think. Our writers are the most experienced and talented reviewers in the business. They're all experts in their chosen genre and they won't pull any punches – if a game's not worth buying, we'll tell you why. But we don't leave it there. We also want to know what you think of the games that come out, which is why we've got our Feedback section on page 134. This is where you get the opportunity to get your point of view into **PC ZONE**. If you've got a comment to make, then we want to hear it.



DON'T BELIEVE THE JARGON

The standard spec machine these days is a P166 with 32Mb of memory – but before buying any game you need to make sure it will work on your system. Because the technical specs on packaging can sometimes be a little optimistic to say the least, make sure you check out the 'We say' bit in our tech specs box at the start of reviews. This is where we report on what we think the minimum tech specs should be. If a game runs like a tortoise on the machine listed by the publishers, then we'll tell you. All the games reviewed are tested on the minimum-spec PC as quoted on the packaging.

WHAT DO OUR SCORES MEAN?

PCZONE 90-100% CLASSIC Here at **ZONE** we score every game out of 100. If a game receives a score of 90 or above, it is awarded the **PC ZONE Classic** award. These games are original, innovative, compelling and are worth buying even if you're not a fan of the genre.

PCZONE 80-89% RECOMMENDED If a game scores 80-89% it's awarded a **PC ZONE Recommended** award. Games that fall into this category are excellent examples of their type, and if you're a fan of the genre they're well worth buying.

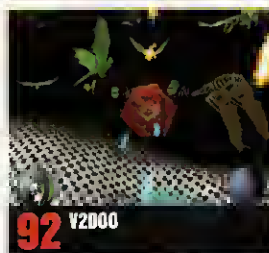
70-79% Games that score in this region don't win any awards, but they're above average and well worth a look. If you're not a fan of the genre though, they will probably offer limited long-term appeal.

20-69% These games are below average and you should really only consider parting with your cash if you're a big fan of the series or genre or you see it at a reduced price.

PCZONE 0-19% PANTS Games that score under 20% should be avoided. They offer little in the way of long-term appeal, can be frustrating, and definitely aren't much fun. If a game is seriously bugged then it will also fall into this category. You have been warned.



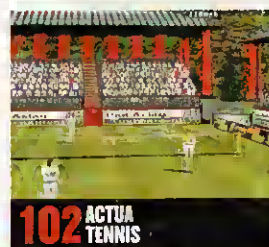
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CARMAG

CARPOCALYPSE NOW

★ £39.99 • SCI • Out November

Splintered chunks of bone in your radiator? Intestines on the windscreen? You must be playing *Carpocalypse Now*, the sequel to the notorious *Carmageddon*. Crawling from the wreckage: *Charlie Brooker*

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Windows 95/98, all major 3D cards **WE SAY** A P200 or above with a 3D accelerator card and loads of memory to spare recommended

**PCZONE
CLASSIC**

Ever played *Colin McRae Rally* on the PlayStation? It's a superb, serious racing game with one hilarious feature: Colin McRae himself. He's well known in international rallying circles, but to the average player he means nothing, save the fact they named a game after him. Why Codemasters felt compelled to lay out cold, hard cash in exchange for the patronage of a complete unknown is anyone's guess: they could've called it *Charles Dickens Rally* instead and not had to pay anybody.

Anyway, the point is this: McRae himself is a permanent fixture on the game's soundtrack. He 'plays' the role of the co-driver,

muttering things like "sharp right" and "straight ahead" in a gruff Scots accent, with all the engaging charm of an RS232 interface lead. Despite this, for some reason he grows on you. And it would've been great to have him providing in-game commentary for *Carmageddon II*.

"Accelerate... Sharp left... Plough through that window... Turn right... You've just killed a man... Over the ramp... Aim at the oncoming vehicle... Reverse into the screaming woman..."

MIRROR, SIGNAL, MANOEUVRE

Carmageddon II is completely, completely horrible. If real life were as horrible as this, the

Samaritans would be out distributing razor blades and sleeping pills. It's far more horrible than the first *Carmageddon*, and since *that's* widely regarded as the single most horrible computer game of all time, this is quite an achievement. In fact, it's far more horrible than the word 'horrible' could ever imply, even if you scrawled it in blood on the wall of a torture chamber, then underlined it by nailing a row of severed fingers carefully into place beneath the dripping text.

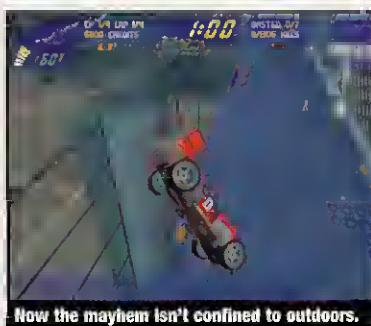
But it's also horrible in a nice way, in that it's hilariously funny. Every five minutes, *Carmageddon II* will do something to make you and your friends guffaw like



Maureen from *Driving School* in one of the programme's many controversial out-takes.



The dangers of driving with a flame-thrower in one hand and a can of petrol in the other.



Now the mayhem isn't confined to outdoors.

ALSO CONSIDER

CARMAGEDDON (GT Interactive Replay, £12.99) The game that launched a thousand protests is still as playable now as it ever was. It can get a bit repetitive after repeated play (it doesn't have the mission structure of the new improved *Carma II*), but at this price it's well worth a look. **PCZ #65, 95%**

INTERSTATE 76 (Activision, £9.99) Hippies in cars, shooting each other and stuff. Not a patch on either *Carma I* or *II* but a viable diversion if your taste for violent in-car action still remains unsated. **PCZ #51, 79%**

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 (Psychosis, £9.99) A pile 'em up which shows many improvements over its predecessor, this game is criminally underrated, and anyone with a tenner to spare should check it out pronto. **PCZ #62, 84%**



“*Carma II* does for *Carma* what *Doom* did for *Wolfenstein 3D*: takes the concept and fine-tunes it, producing a game that is a ghoulish dream come true for fans of the original”



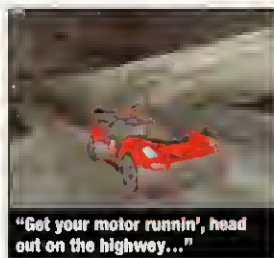
The Opponent Repulsificator power-up enables you to hurl the other cars around like Matchbox toys.



Production still from *The Texaco Forecourt Massacre Part IV*.



Reverse over his head the moment he hits the floor.



"Get your motor runnin', head out on the highway..."



One of the power-ups fixes a huge mace to your rear. Lovely.



Did we mention that you can set the peds on fire this time round?



The instructor was *certain* to fall Terry for this particular mishap.



Ski Sunday meets Death Race 2000.



← Hollywood villains – guaranteed. It's the direct gaming equivalent of played-for-laughs horror flicks like *Bad Taste*, *Brain Dead* and, most obviously, *Death Race 2000*. Abattoir slapstick is the order of the day. The on-screen action is so relentless in its breathtaking tastelessness that you can't help getting swept along.

For all its sanguine violence, *Carmageddon II*'s *raison d'être* is really quite touchingly simple:

it just wants to make you laugh. That's all. The beauty of it is that the 'jokes' aren't scripted, they occur naturally around you during play. More on this later.

If for some mad reason you've never played the original *Carmageddon*, permit us to explain. It's a racing game that actively encourages you to do all the entertaining, time-wasting stuff you've always tried doing in all the other, sober racing games.

Ever tried driving off the track? In *Carmageddon* you spend more time off the track than on it. Fancied a head-on collision with the other cars? Head-on collisions are *Carmageddon*'s meat and drink. Wanted to veer off course and run over one of the spectators? Prepare for overkill.

The game consists of a series of all-out races around a set of wildly varied environments, encompassing everything from ski slopes to nuclear missile bases. There are three ways to win: a) the dullard's way (race through all the checkpoints before time runs out, à la *Ridge Racer*);

b) the vandal's way (destroy the other cars by ramming them to bits); and c) the methodical serial killer's way (run over every single pedestrian in town).

Ah, yes. Pedestrians.

HIT AND RUN

In *Carma* numero uno, pedestrians were represented by flat, animated sprites. For the sequel, they've made the leap into three dimensions, just like *Quake* marines. "So what?" you may snort. Well, it actually makes a huge difference to the gameplay. In the original game, the hapless peds were mere window dressing

as far as the physics engine was concerned. They might spin around in the air, or fall from the occasional skyscraper, but that was about it. Now, the same set of mathematical routines that decides where the cars end up after each collision can get to work on the people. Hit a ped at speed and they go flying. If they plough into another ped en route, they'll go flying too. Should one of them strike a wall as they hurtle through the air, it might be enough to knock their leg off. Or perhaps their head. And should their head come off, it might bounce around for a bit and then



Sometimes, the pedestrians...





Looks like Holby Casualty's going to have its work cut out again.



Carmageddon II: It's a tad 'in-your-face'.



A sturdy roof rack comes in handy.

come to rest on the pavement, at which point another ped might even trip over it.

It's all thanks to the laws of physics – the expert simulation of which make *Carmageddon II* what it is. The world created here may be insanely brutal, but it's also

“The way the cars buckle, bend and slowly fall apart – and sometimes even shear in half – is incredible”

logical. Every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Every collision is absolutely spot on. Every single second of motion is utterly convincing and utterly lifelike. And having created an environment in which the laws of physics are recreated in high-on perfect detail, all the programmers need do is give you a whole bunch of fun stuff to play with.

You can see how most of the gaming elements got there: somebody thought “What if...?”

“See that big hill over there? Well, what if we put some huge boulders on top of it so you can

nudge them off with your car and they roll down the slope, squashing people and crushing the other cars?”

“What if we put in a power-up that makes the pedestrians float around as if they're filled with helium, so that when it runs out they rain down like overfilled bags of offal?”

“What if we have a bit where you plough into a herd of elephants and...?”

AN AIRBAG SAVED MY LIFE

There isn't room to list all the ways in which *Carma II* improves on the original. The



...just don't know when to lie down.



“Tell my wife I love h... arrrrrrgh!”



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Carmageddon was voted Game of the Year in our 1997 Readers Awards, but despite this you weren't *all* happy with it. Here we look at the accusations levelled at the first game... then see how the sequel does its best to see them off. If you *hated* the original, *Carma II* won't do anything for you; but if you were put off by a few minor niggles, this might set you straight. Ready? Go...

CRITICISM #1: “It's too free-form, so you just end up driving around for a laugh. Fun, but the novelty soon wears off.”

Carmageddon II's basic principles remain the same, but there are several important ‘tweaks’ to the overall game structure. This time round, the levels are grouped together into little bunches. Progressing from one level to the next is achieved by the familiar method (win the race, smash the other cars, or kill all the peds), but in order to move to the next bunch you have to complete a special ‘mission’ stage.

These stages are excellent. They vary from the deceptively simple (pass through each checkpoint within a set amount of time) to the transparently taxing (destroy an immense lorry that's on your tail, à la *Ouef*).

By including occasional missions such as these, *Stainless* have achieved the perfect balance: you're still free to do as you wish during the majority of the stages, but every so often you need to knuckle down and focus your attention on the task at hand. Wicked.

CRITICISM #2: “The tracks are confusing. I can't find the other cars and I keep getting lost.”

One problem with *Carma I* was that it was far too easy to swerve off course and lose your bearings. There was a map, but accessing it was fiddly, and most of the time you'd end up ploughing into something while you looked at it. *Carma II* solves this problem at a stroke with the introduction of a miniature radar map thingumajig in the bottom-right corner of the screen. Not only does it detail your immediate surroundings, it also shows the direction of the next checkpoint and the ideal racing line for the current race. Better yet, it indicates the bearing of your nearest opponent, making car-on-car dogfights a far more exciting experience. Now you can hound the other vehicles to death without having to refer to a separate screen all the time. Magic.

CRITICISM #3: “The tracks are too big for multiplayer games.”

Not any more, they're not. There are now several multiplayer-specific levels featuring tighter, more contained race tracks, thereby upping the thrills-per-minute quotient at a stroke. Fandabbydozy.

CRITICISM #4: “It's too difficult to steer.”

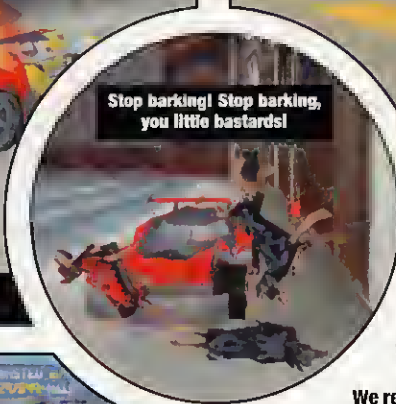
Hmm. Well, this one's a little trickier. The handling in *Carma II* feels very similar to *Carma I*, so if you had problems getting to grips with *that*, chances are you'll struggle this time round as well. Having said that, there are loads more new cars to try out, so you're bound to find one you like eventually. Even if it's a combine harvester. Raa.

CRITICISM #5: “The graphics aren't great.”

They are now – assuming you've got a shit-hot machine and a 3D card, that is. The minimum spec is a Pentium 166; we'd recommend a P200 and upwards, with a 3Dfx card, natch. Then it looks good enough to eat. Assuming you often eat raw, bleeding carnage, that is.



I'll have some mayhem please, with a side order of fiery chaos.



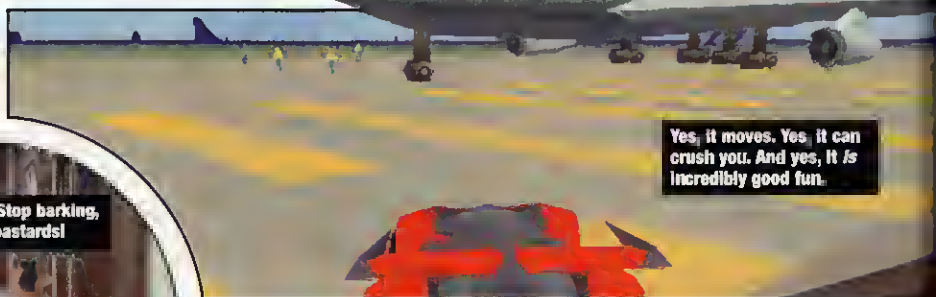
Stop barking! Stop barking, you little bastards!



Nice day for a picnic.



Now that wasn't a very nice thing to do, was it?



Yes, it moves. Yes, it can crush you. And yes, it is incredibly good fun.

IF YOU TOLERATE THIS YOUR CHILDREN WILL BE NEXT

We might like *Carmageddon II*, but the BBFC might not

We reviewed the full-on, no-holds-barred, raw, screaming, bloody-stumps-an'-all version of *Carmageddon II*. At the time of writing, however, it's still unclear whether this Incarnation of the game will ever legally see the light of day in the UK. Publishers SCI are, unsurprisingly, anticipating a few problems with the BBFC – the film classification body which initially placed a halt on the gory version of the original *Carmageddon*.

The problem, it seems, is that the pedestrians are 'innocent people'. Except of course, they're not. They're only graphics in a computer game.

Anyway, depending on which way things go, you'll be playing either 'red' *Carma II* or 'green' *Carma II*, 'green' being the version in which the pedestrians are replaced with shambling undead

zombies (with green blood). It doesn't affect the gameplay (or the score) in the slightest, it's more of a 'mood' thing than anything else. Here at *ZONE* we don't mind the zombies too much; the game still retains its nihilistic, grisly appeal. But we do prefer the peds, which is why we hope the BBFC will pass it – with an 18 certificate.

And if they don't? Well, rest assured – someone's bound to post a patch on the Internet that transforms the zombies back into humans (we reckon some enterprising soul will do it within 24 hours of the game going on sale). You may not want it however as the feel of the zombie version lends the game a menacing air, with the zombies acting like zombies, and not like regular peds that gush green on impact.

Living in the future – it's a laugh, innit?

way the cars buckle, bend and slowly fall apart – sometimes even shear in half – is incredible.

The levels are an immense improvement: more ambitious, packed with more features, designed with greater clarity and attractive palettes. There are missions. There are animals. There are hundreds more objects to crash into and plough through.

There's a small indicator at the bottom of the screen telling you the status of your nearest opponent – how damaged their car is, and what they're currently 'doing' (illustrative examples being "racing to checkpoint", "vowing to kill you" and "shitting himself"). The replay camera is

even better than ever: you can track the progress of any object, re-position the camera at will, even save your finest moments as movie files then upload them to the Internet.

You can smash through windows, crash through walls. There's a level that starts on an airport runway just as an immense jumbo jet is coming in to land overhead...

Carma II does for *Carmageddon* what *Doom* did for *Wolfenstein 3D*: takes the concept and fine-tunes it, producing a game that is a ghoulish dream come true for fans of the original... and a kick in the cock for the critics. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS • More spectacular than ever • Improved physics, smashable vehicles, 3D pedestrians • Mission-based levels create a much-needed sense of purpose • Easily tweakable by the player • Absolutely bloody hilarious

DOWNERS Handling still a touch too 'slippery' • Intrinsically very similar to the original • May get banned outright • Needs a powerful PC to get the most out of it

95 Pornography for anarchists



Stainless say there'll be a patch out by Christmas so that you can play over the Net.

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V2000

★ £39.99 • Grolier Interactive • Out Friday October 2

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TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P120 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx and most 3D cards, multiplay over network and Internet **WE SAY** Try a P200 with a 3D card and 32Mb RAM

ALSO CONSIDER

MAGIC CARPET 2 (Bullfrog, £9.99)

Fast, smooth and wonderfully playable, but now a bit long in the tooth. **PCZ #32, 92%**

SUB CULTURE (Ubi Soft, £29.95) A

similar feel, albeit underwater, and also relies on inertia for control. A trifle difficult, but with plenty of variety. **PCZ #57, 75%**

PCZONE CLASSIC

Coder David Braben describes *V2000* as "a measured blend of action, strategy, shoot 'em up and adventure".

He goes on: "It has hidden depths and immense playability. It's genre-less, but sits very comfortably on its own." In keeping with *Virus* (PCZ #57, 49%), the prequel, Braben has created another 3D world and given you complete freedom to roam through it. Your task is

simple: use the supplied craft to rid each world of a deadly virus which is being insidiously spread by the swarming alien hordes. Destroying the enemy hives which spawn their offspring is the only way to save the planet.

You all want to know about the controls though, so let's bite the bullet: anyone can tell you that the original *Virus* was a complete bitch to control – just keeping the craft airborne was nigh on impossible. Braben concedes: "Most people flew, flipped upside down, died and gave up. I wanted to avoid that this time." He has. In *V2000* you control an updated version of the *Virus* craft, which can now transform between a hovercraft and an airborne vehicle. While the hovercraft is a cinch to control and requires no fuel, it's cumbersome on undulating land and therefore vulnerable to attack. The flying



Defending a native factory from enemy attack.

craft is faster, but less easy to manoeuvre and also requires regular refuelling.

The perspective is akin to the original game, with the action viewed from above and behind your craft. However, this time the 'game camera' proves both intelligent and responsive, keeping you right at the heart of the action. The control method is

where pushing down lowers your craft's nose, alters its pitch and enables you to thrust forward, while pushing back has the reverse effect. *Virus* junkies, however, will favour Absolute mode, which turns the whole craft, rather than just the nose, in response to movements. It's the less intuitive of the two but, as if to compensate, it benefits from

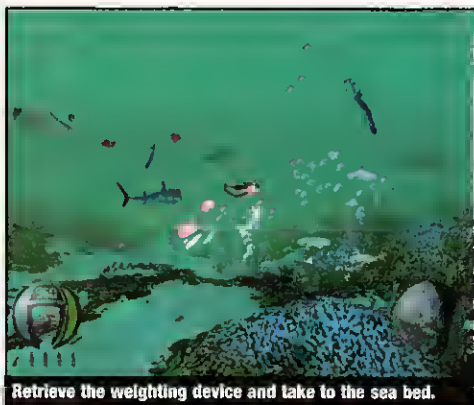
"Shoot 'em up fans will get satisfaction from the blasting action, while strategists will enjoy exercising their grey matter"

similar too, but Braben has added the magic ingredients of two spoontuls of sanity and a pinch of common sense. Salvation comes in the form of two diverse control methods, which are as equally suited to joystick input as they are to a mouse. Most people will prefer the Relative Tight mode,

adjustable sensitivity which enables you to either keep the craft's pitch constant or responsive to your movements. Regardless of which method you favour, there's an added 'get out of jail free' card in the form of the 'self-righting' option which levels your craft if you relinquish control.



Protecting your base, in hovercraft mode.



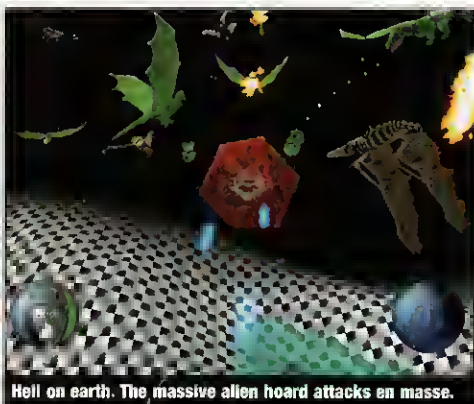
Retrieve the weighting device and take to the sea bed.



A putrid enemy hive covered in a grotesque virus.



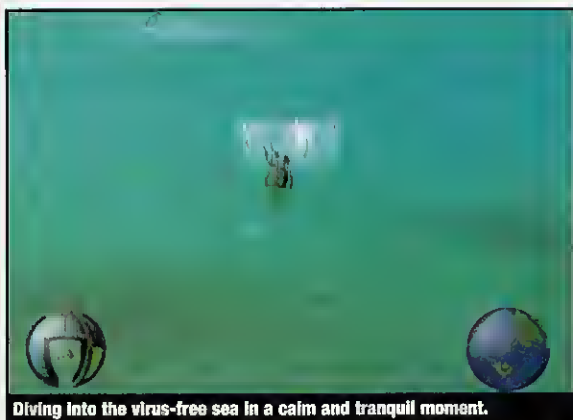
A massive arachnid spreads the virus. Kill it at all costs.



Hell on earth. The massive alien hoard attacks en masse.



Protect the battlements, but don't forget the back door.



Diving into the virus-free sea in a calm and tranquil moment.

So, there you have it. You can rest assured that this time round the subtlety of the controls enhances the gameplay rather than detracts from it.

A QUESTION OF BALANCE

The clever thing about *V2000* is that it works on two levels: shoot 'em up fans will get short-term satisfaction from the blasting action, while strategists will enjoy exercising their grey matter. To make any significant progress, however, you need to use a delicate mixture of both. Taking one of the 30 single-player levels as an example: you decide to confront the enemy by slaughtering some isolated arachnids and attacking their hive. However, your abandonment of the natives leads to their extinction. Hell descends upon the landscape and the mood darkens as the massed legions

of scum attack in a furious onslaught. They may retreat eventually, but their inevitable return forces you to contemplate a more strategic approach.

Those of a more cerebral disposition will rescue the natives (*Star Trek*-fashion – you just beam them up) and put them to work in the disused factories. These grateful refugees will then build weapons and accessories for you. It's therefore possible to survive by constantly dashing between the factories and the battle, but you have to balance the need to rescue natives (by returning them to safety) and picking up weapons as they're produced and trying to halt the spread of the virus.

It's those game mechanics that make this a compulsory purchase. Braben clearly believes playability and fun are a large part of the gaming equation, and it's



The red virus, overseen by passing alien scum, spreads dangerously close to a clean water source.

apparent that he's done the maths. The difficulty curve is pitched just right too, with on-screen prompts guiding you through your first missions. It may even prove too easy, especially if the over-friendly 'save game' option is abused. But anyone rushing through the worlds will miss out on numerous secrets (including a level which pays homage to the original *Virus*), the secondary missions, and the fun to be had on the six dedicated multiplayer levels, accessible via network or Internet play.

The graphics really are incidental to the gameplay, but are functional nonetheless. Unfortunately, we do witness the unwelcome return of Mist-O-Vision, which envelops the playing area and restricts the

forward view somewhat. On the upside, the claustrophobia it creates adds to the Armageddon-like atmosphere and serves to eliminate unwanted 'pop up'. There's the mandatory 3D accelerator support, but the software-driven code presents a perfectly smooth and playable game in its own right (in low-res at least). Aurally, things are impressive. There's no in-game music, but the ambient spot effects are appropriate to the action, and play out the feeling of imminent doom superbly.

There are a few frustrations, such as your craft disappearing briefly behind larger objects before the perspective adjusts. Also, it can be hard to pick out the natives in the heat of battle, and it's all too easy to kill them with

stray shots. You need to be a bit cautious with new weapons too – a badly aimed grenade is a messy and suicidal way to end a level. But these really are minor blemishes in what is an otherwise fine game. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

- UPPERS Classic '80s playability • A healthy dose of strategy • A plethora of weapons and accessories • Loads of hidden extras • Several control methods
- DOWNERS Only 30 levels • Slightly repetitive gameplay

90 *Virus* is back, and it's in cracking form



A world overrun with the virus. Unless the hive can be destroyed quickly the aliens will launch a final assault.



A stroll in the woods.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

You couldn't describe the natives as pacifists. Here are just a few of the pieces of hardware they manufacture for you

Gun
Standard issue peashooter. Has a short range and low power. Get rid of this as soon as is practicable.

Flame-thrower.
Geed old-fashioned alien teaser. It's useless underwater, but great for causing mayhem near the hive.

Flares
Useful to light the way, but a feeble weapon.

Guided missiles
Fire-and-forget weaponry that locks on to its intended target and pursues it relentlessly.

Plasma gun
Comes in three flavours: red, green and blue. A very powerful airborne weapon, but weak underwater.

Chain gun
Rapid-fire gun. Not very hi-tech, but effective.

Smart bomb
Dees exactly what it says on the tin. Creates chaos over a wide area. Ideal in large-scale confrontations.

Virus
A weapon et last resort. Causes minor damage to localised enemies, but actually spreads the virus.

Proximity mine
A time-delayed depth charge which produces a devastating explosive effect.

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX

★ £34.99 • Take 2 Interactive • Out end of October

Think *Rainbow Six*. Think Rod, Jane, Freddie, Bungle, Zippy and George. No room for Geoffrey, then. Or *Richie Shoemaker*

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166MMX Memory 16Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES** Win95, DirectX-compatible sound and video cards **SUPPORTED** Hardware acceleration through Direct3D **WE SAY** P166, 32Mb RAM and a 3D card are recommended



Based on the Tom Clancy book of the same name, *Rainbow Six* is a strategic action game where you're the commander of a fictional group of elite soldiers out saving the free world from tyranny. It boasts a plot most action-oriented games can only dream of. Mission briefings provide all the info you could ever need and then some. But the strongest part of *Rainbow Six* is the precise planning that is required to succeed. Take the *Quake* approach and you might just make it to the final showdown; although with it taking just one shot to leave a man in a pool of his own blood, you'd have to be the best damn *Quake*ster this side of Jupiter.

Each of your potential combatants is blessed with an

array of attributes ranging from marksmanship to aggression. You have only a few of the best candidates; if you lose them you'll have to rely on an inexhaustible supply of 'reserves', so it's advisable to mix up your eight-strong team a bit. You can certainly get through the easy level with reserves alone, but try the 'elite' setting (with added mission objectives) and you'll

handy with a shotgun and can diffuse bombs quickly; recon troops are fast and lightly armoured; and electronics experts can deactivate security systems. For those missions where stealth is vital, it's wise to equip your specialists with heartbeat sensors so you can detect patrolling guards. Then there are the weapons: HK MP5, flashbang grenades, M-16A2 and the trusty Berreta 9mm. All this and we haven't covered the action part yet.

NOW LISTEN UP, PEOPLE

After you've assigned all your operatives into squads, it's on to the planning stage. It may look quite complicated but after a couple of minutes it becomes

“For the *Quake* fan who's longing to apply a bit of strategic thinking, this could be the game you've been waiting for”

soon find out why it's best to keep your top bods alive.

Because the bulk of the missions involve liberating hostages, in many cases it isn't necessary to go in killing everyone in sight — just get the poor bastards out alive. In certain instances your detection will result in failure, so it's pretty important to choose the right people and equipment for each job: demolition experts are pretty

second nature. Teams (Blue, Red, Green and Gold) are simply given a set of waypoints to follow. You can set the speed and alertness of the team, and unless you're in direct control of them at the time, they'll follow your orders to the letter. Specialist orders can be set up at specific locations, like flashbombing rooms or diffusing bombs, as well as prompted orders where teams will only move on when given the word.

This means you can arrange for two teams to position themselves on either side of a room, bursting in together only when you give the go-ahead.

With your game plan saved, it's time to commit to the action. By default you lead the Blue team, and as soon as you start, the other teams will scuttle off in the direction you've ordered them to go. Within seconds you'll hear them engage the enemy. If your plan is sound and the recon information you've been given was correct, then you should succeed. Probably, though, something will go wrong. Whole teams can be wiped out by one terrorist, and if your timing is out there may be no one around to provide back-up. You can change orders halfway through by taking direct control, but if that becomes a necessity then you're probably screwed anyway. Casualties will be high, and it might be best to formulate a new plan of attack.

DIRECT ACTION

Graphically, *Rainbow Six* is slightly disappointing. The motion-captured characters look good but the environments are simplistic though varied. It would have been nice to see furniture collapse in the wake of a well-placed grenade; the fact that you can't really make use of cover very effectively means the game fails to meet the high standard of

realism it's set for itself; a greater range of movement and a few more specific orders would certainly have pushed the score up a few notches.

Intelligence-wise, your troops can end up getting themselves into all sorts of trouble: instead of covering each other, they tend to go through choke points tightly packed, and usually get cut up pretty bad; send everyone to ascend a ladder and one or two will just get confused and walk around in circles unless you take direct control.

But none of these problems are enough to detract from the overall sense of excitement this game can bring. While you can blame your troops for occasionally being dim, the overall responsibility for failure is down to planning. And while there are few opportunities to get into huge firefights, *Rainbow Six* is one of those rare games where the level of tension more than makes up for its failings.

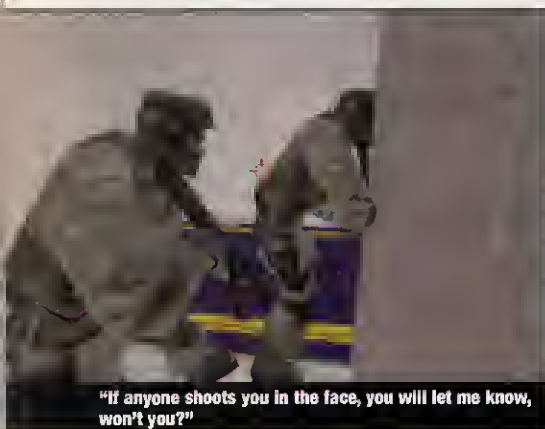
Like *Spec Ops* (PCZ #65, BB%), *Rainbow Six* is 'incredibly addictive. Unlike *Spec Ops*, however, *Rainbow Six* is a game that, thanks to its replayability, makes it something you'll keep going back to time and time again. For the dedicated *Quake* fan who's been longing to apply a bit of strategic thinking, *Rainbow Six* could well be the game you've been waiting for. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Almost perfect mix of action and strategy • Compelling plot and plenty of depth • High replayability factor • Large varied missions

DOWNERS Some questionable AI niggles • More interaction with the scenery required • The graphics engine is hardly state of the art

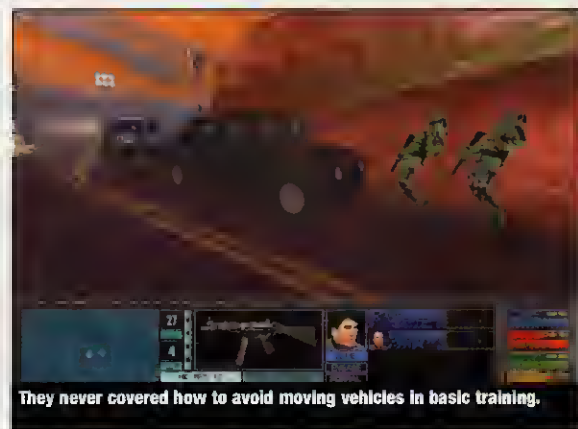
89 Take 2 in (another) good game shock



"If anyone shoots you in the face, you will let me know, won't you?"



Playable in first- or third-person perspective. Which is nice.



They never covered how to avoid moving vehicles in basic training.

I HAVE A LAN

To be perfectly honest, multiplayer games are a bit of a disappointment

Unfortunately you can't have two players directing computer-assisted teams, planning strategies and taking pot shots at each other. You can go at it co-operative style and have three computer-controlled team mates following you around but it would've been incredible if the developers had incorporated the planning element into multiplayer skirmishes. That said, if you can get enough people involved, there is an impressive array of multiplayer games to try out. It won't be as manic as, say, *Team Fortress*, but if you prefer something along the lines of online paintballing then *Rainbow Six* is the closest you'll find. Developers Red Storm have promised to make new multiplayer modes available for download so there is at least some hope. Check out www.redstorm.com for more details.



"Er, I think we're in the wrong game. Isn't that Guy Threepwood over there?"



"Did the terrorists do that, or were you always that ugly?"

ALSO CONSIDER

SPEC OPS: RANGERS ASSUALT

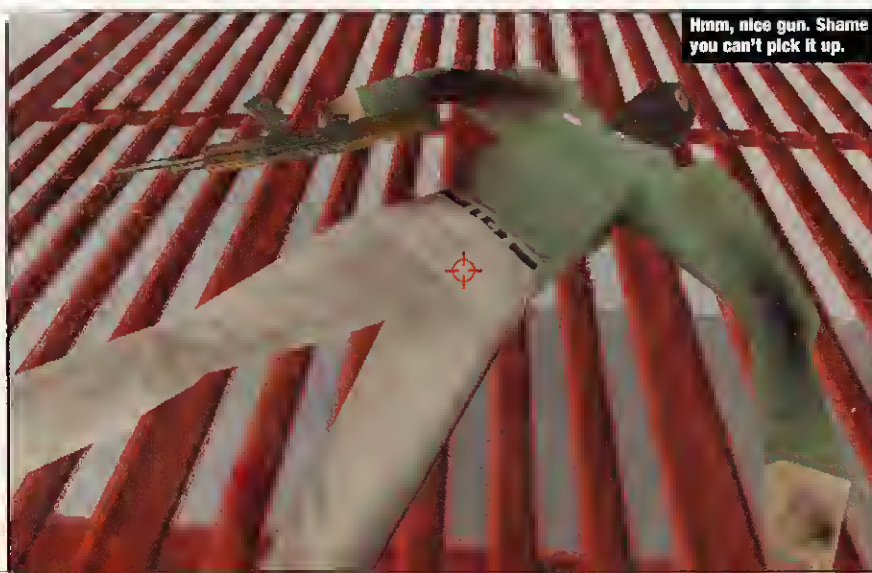
(Take 2, £34.99) More brains than *Quake* and, in the short term, perhaps a bit more fun than *Rainbow Six*. Don't expect to be playing this forever though – a week, tops.

PCZ #65, 88%

DEADLINE (Psygnosis, £9.99)

An *X-COM*-style strategy game where you direct another group of elite soldiers. Graphically, it sucks, but if it's tedious planning you want you'll find it here.

PCZ #62, 36%



Hmm, nice gun. Shame you can't pick it up.



"Hey, don't look at me that way, it scares me."

WALKTHROUGH

I HAVE A PLAN

As any boy scout will tell you, before you start a ruck it's important to be prepared



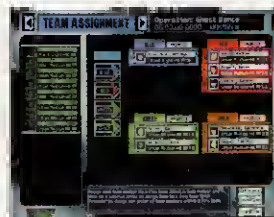
1 Here's where you find out about the mission requirements. Listen carefully, or you may send in the heavy mob when you only need one man.



2 Check out those vital statistics, carefully. Do you go for an all-elite force, or risk heavy losses with the cannon fodder reserves?



3 You've got the right chaps, now you need to get the right equipment. In most cases the default settings should do the trick.



4 The next part simply involves sorting out whether you want two four-man teams or four pairs. For reconnaissance purposes a team of one is advisable.



5 The all-important planning stage. It's actually a lot easier than it looks. Get this right and the rest should be plain sailing. Yeah right.



Need For Speed III is the kind of game networks were invented for.

NEED FOR SPEED III: HOT PURSUIT

Beetle driver *Jeremy Wells* felt the need for speed – so he went and bought a Westfield and wrapped it round a tree. He should have stuck with EA's latest road racer

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** PowerVR, 3Dfx and all major 3D graphics accelerator cards **WE SAY** Play it with a force-feedback wheel and a 3D accelerator card and you're in boy racer heaven

**PCZONE
CLASSIC**

★ £39.99 • Electronic Arts • Out now

It's a well-known fact among driving game fans that: a) the original *Need For Speed* (PCZ #31, 89%) was great; and b) the sequel, *Need For Speed II* (PCZ #50, 78%) wasn't. Thankfully, the developers have managed to get it right the third time, because *Need For Speed III: Hot Pursuit* is mighty fine. What's more, the PC version pisses on the PlayStation version (released a few months ago) from a great height. You get more cars, dashboard views, multiplayer

options, you'll shortly be able to download extra cars from the Internet, and of course, thanks to the wonders of 3D acceleration, it looks heaps better too.

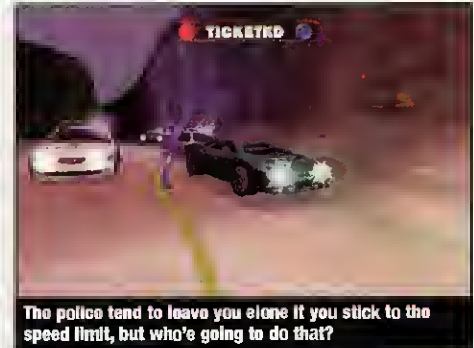
CAUGHT BY THE FUZZ

Like other, more traditional driving games, *NFS3* is essentially a race around a circuit, and the idea is to get there first before your opponent(s). However, unlike other racing games, here you can take part in an illegal road race, which means you have to contend

with oncoming traffic and the police. It's important to point out here that, true to life, if you drive at just a few mph above the speed limit (and it's pretty impossible not to, considering some of the high-performance cars you're driving) the law will be on you and your fellow racers like flies around a freshly laid dog turd. And they don't give up. At first they'll shout out a warning and order you to stop. Then they'll start to gently nudge you. Then they'll try to overtake you and



The competitor driver AI is impressive, and they'll react to aggressive behaviour.



The police tend to leave you alone if you stick to the speed limit, but who's going to do that?



There are multiple camera views, but out-of-car looks the best.



The 11 cars are highly detailed and perform like you'd expect them to.



Driving at night in the rain and snow is a real challenge.



It's a shame there are no Mini Coopers, otherwise you could recreate *The Italian Job*.

force you to stop. If that fails to slow you down they'll resort to spike trails – which can be avoided if you notice them in time.

Basically, the police act like complete bastards and drive like bloody maniacs. The good thing is, they're not infallible. You're quite likely to come haring round a corner being chased by the fuzz, and see another of the buggers

“Basically, the police act like complete bastards and drive like bloody maniacs. The good thing is, they're not infallible”

coming the other way. If you're quick, you can pull to one side at the very last second and the two cop cars will have a head-on collision. They'll also career off the road just as much as you will if you nudge them enough, and they often lose it on corners too. It's a great laugh trying to avoid them, and brings a whole new dimension to the driving game genre. As a bonus, you can also drive a cop car and be the one

doing the chasing. It's not as much fun being on the law's side (who would you rather be – Bow and Luke Duke, or Enice and Roscoe?) but it helps add to the game's longevity, and that can only be a good thing.

THE CARS ARE THE STARS

Of course, one of the game's real pulling points is that you get to

road race some of the world's finest performance cars. At least they seem to handle differently, especially on the different road conditions, and there's talk of being able to download more cars from the Internet once the game is released, which would be a rather nice plus point.

As before, you customise the cars with various different paint jobs, and if you're playing in 'Pro' mode you can also mess around

ALSO CONSIDER

ULTIMATE RACE PRO (MicroProse, £29.99) Good value, but then it's 3D accelerator-only. You'll be slip-slidin' at first, but once you get used to the way the cars handle, the game's a lorra, lorra fun. **PCZ #62, 88%**

MOTORHEAD (Gremlin, £39.99) Great in terms of cars, tracks and options, and goes like the clappers with a blistering frame rate. Fabulous fun over a network. **PCZ #63, 90%**

SCREAMER 2 (VIE, £9.99) It's looking a bit dated now, but you can pick it up on budget for around a tenner, so if you're strapped for cash it's well worth a look. **PCZ #65, 88%**

with gear ratios, engine power and brake settings if you're that way inclined.

The level of AI of the competitors and the police must be highlighted as being the best we've come across in a racing game. It's by no means perfect, ➔

TURN IT OFF AND SPEED IT UP



It's running like a 2CV, then lose some of the detail, stupid!

Need For Speed III undoubtedly looks utterly fab with all the graphical options switched on and whacked up to full detail. However, unless you've got a ninja-bast (™PC ZONE) PC with plenty of RAM and a 3D accelerator card, it's going to run like a Mini Metro with

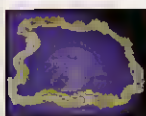
four fat people in it going up a steep hill.

Fear not though. The sheer number of foggable graphical options mean that you can play it quite happily on a P133 with 16Mb of RAM and a first-generation 3D accelerator card, without any problems at all if you're prepared to lose some of the graphical niceties. For instance, you can alter the car texture detail or turn it off completely; you can lose the posh chrome effect (don't worry, it still looks smart); turn off the horizon; switch off the special effects; lose the rear-view mirror etc. In fact the list is almost endless. What this means is that you can customise the graphics to increase the frame rate depending on the spec of your PC. Thankfully, even on the most modest settings it still looks pretty good, even played in a lower res than the standard 640x480. Well done EA for thinking of those of us who don't own P333s with 128Mb of RAM and two Voodoo2s. Other developers please take note.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

What *NFS3*'s different circuits offer

All in all there are eight tracks to race around, and you can also race on 'mirrored' versions of them, which makes 16 tracks in all. Sort of. Anyway, they're all pretty lengthy and each throws up a different set of hazards. Here's a quick rundown of what you can expect



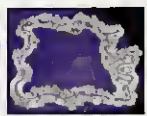
HOME TOWN

It may be a rural setting, but this first track is anything but laid back. Speed is the name of the game here. Keep your eyes peeled for landmarks that can help with your timing on corners and jumps.



REDROCK RIDGE

This canyon course requires a focused driving strategy. Speed zones littered with dust and obstacles push the handling envelope of your chosen car.



COUNTRY WOODS

Buckle up! This high-speed course starts on gentle farmlands and moves into more challenging country roads and backwoods. If you break down, just don't get out of your car – honk your horn and wait for the police to arrive. You've seen *Deliverance*, haven't you?



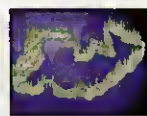
ATLANTICA

Reminiscent of the Monaco Grand Prix, this course is a real driver's utopia – or so it says here. Keep it tight and work on your racing technique to ensure a record time.



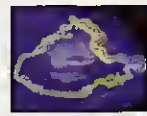
LOST CANYONS

Prepare to drop out of sight as this course takes you from ground level into the depths of the canyon floor in seconds. Now is the time to balance speed with steering technique. Alternatively, stick it on cruise control, stick *The Eagles'* *Greatest Hits* on and have a beer.



ROCKY PASS

Simplicity can be deceptive. While not appearing overly intimidating, this course presents a serious challenge to even the most seasoned racers.



AQUATICA

This urban utopia gives way to an exciting coastline driving experience. You'll need superior driving skills to make good times on this formidable driving course. Just don't do a Jimmy Dean.



SUMMIT

The name 'Summit' is rather apt, not only for this course's environment, but also for its towering challenges. You'll need complete mastery of your racing repertoire to finish unscathed and victorious. But then that's true of all of the above.

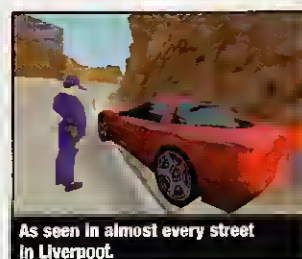


There are three difficulty levels: Novice, Rookie and Pro.



There are eight tracks in all and each one is rendered in 16-bit colour.

OI, MATE! WATCH ME TYRES!



As seen in almost every street in Liverpool.

As well as trying to ram you off the road at high speed, the unruly cops will seemingly go to any lengths to give you a ticket. Not only will they lurk behind signs and barriers in an effort to catch you out, they'll also use spike trails, which they lay across the road to rip your tyres to shreds.

If you listen to their incessant radio chatter you can usually get some idea of when and where they're going to resort to such completely dishonourable tactics, so slow down and get ready for a bit of off-roading in order to avoid four flats and a ticket.



The eight tracks can be 'mirrored', so essentially there are 16 to race over.



"Mmm... Nice car. Want to show me what it can do?"



but different competitors do seem to have different personalities, and if aggravated will retaliate by increasing their speed, nudging you, blocking you, ramming you and, yes, even honking their horn – utter bastards! If you play on 'Novice' level their degree of aggression is pretty much limited to a gentle nudge and plenty of honking, but on 'Rookie' or 'Pro' modes it's a different matter. Suffice to say don't go ramming willy-nilly if you want to finish the race in one piece.

TIME TO MAKE TRACKS

There are eight different courses in all, with what EA call 'real world' themes. This basically means that, among other things, there's an Alpine course, a suburban course and a desert course, which is by no means original. The tracks are quite long and pretty well-designed, however, and there's plenty of scope for off-road shenanigans and shortcuts.

As well as ramming other cars, you can also knock down

road signs, carve up the turf and perform wicked doughnuts to mark out your territory. Night driving is an absolute blast, especially considering you've got high and low beams, and driving in the wet and on ice is a real challenge. There is a kind of tutor with navigator speech and on-screen arrows to help you stay on the track, and other helpful options you can switch on, such as traction control and automatic braking. If you've got no mates, there's also the facility to race

against yourself with a 'ghost' car. Suffice to say it appears that EA have thought of everything and included as much as possible.

Need For Speed III succeeds in bringing the fun factor back to driving games – just as *Carmageddon* does, albeit in a different way – and therefore comes very highly recommended. It's the kind of game that you'll spend ages playing and then keep coming back to for a quick spin. Go buy it and burn some rubber. You'd be a fool not to. **W**

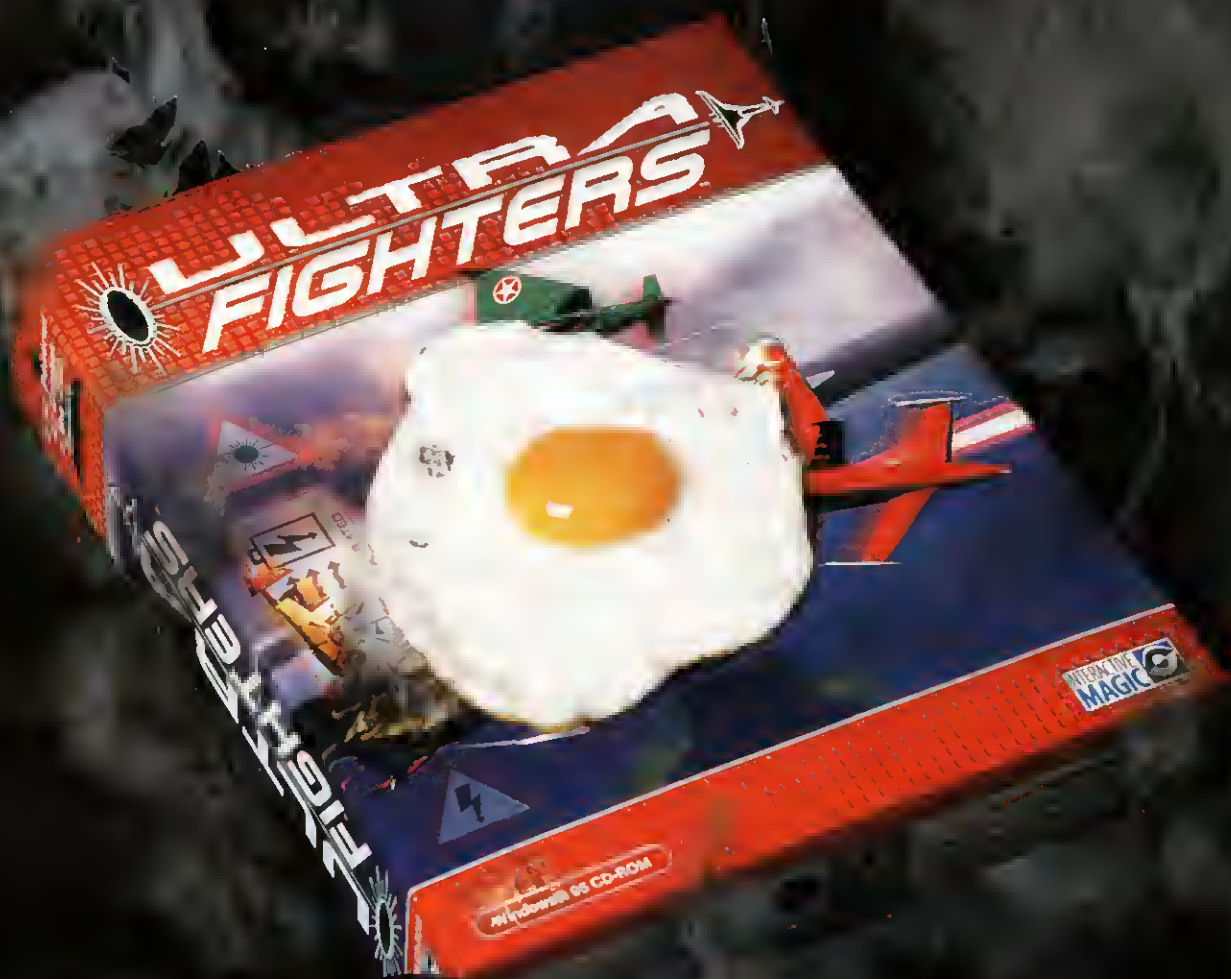
PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Great graphics and loads of attention to detail • Heaps of options • Handy split-screen option • You don't just race, you can chase and be chased

DOWNERS Cheesy 'rock' soundtrack • No *Italian Job* Mini Cooper option

91 Just what *Dukes Of Hazard* fans have been waiting for

FRY THE ENEMY SUNNY SIDE UP



In the 26th Century, the world's fossil fuel supplies have been exhausted. Corporate empires rule the globe and war has become a game of profits and losses. Right now however, you have more pressing matters to worry about! You've got another UltraFighter on your six, an electric jet piloted by a mercenary employed by the ruthless Zindo Empire. Give him another second or two and he'll divert his battery power to his losers and make Swiss cheese from you and your own UltraFighter.



ULTRA FIGHTERS. The hottest solar powered adrenaline rush under the sun.

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“Don't expect to boot up and clock up a record lap – it just won't happen. This means it won't be for everybody”

The driver AI has been improved, with opposition drivers going out of their way to avoid you even when you're stuck on the racing line.



MONACO GRAND PRIX

★ £34.99 • Ubi Soft • Out now

The simulation formerly known as *F1 Racing Sim* is back, with a new name and no official FIA licence. **Jeremy Wells** looks at what they spent the money on

ALSO CONSIDER

F1 RACING SIMULATION (Ubi Soft, £39.99) Sports the official FIA licence – all the cars, teams and drivers from last season are present and correct. **PCZ #67, 93%**

F1 GRAND PRIX 2 (MicroProse, £34.99) Has no 3D hardware support and looks out-of-date but it's good value if you can find it for less than full price. **PCZ #67, 91%**

F1 97 (Psygnosis, £39.99) This is 3D hardware-only and is the most arcadey of the F1 games. Poor driver AI and fiddly menu system make it frustrating. **PCZ #67, 90%**

GRAND PRIX LEGENDS (Cendant, £39.99) Looks great and handles like a dream. (See review on p104).

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor/Memory P166 with 32Mb RAM or P133 with 32Mb RAM with 3D accelerator card **SUPPORTS** PowerVR, 3Dfx and all major 3D graphics accelerator cards **WE SAY** You'll need plenty of RAM and second-generation 3D hardware if you want to race a full-on Grand Prix with 22 cars. A force-feedback steering wheel adds to the whole realism thing dramatically

PCZONE CLASSIC

In case you don't already know, *Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2* is the sequel to the rather super *F1 Racing Simulation*. It's not called *F1 Racing Simulation 2* because the going rate for the official FIA licence that enables

you to use the real team, driver and circuit names is now such a ridiculously absurd amount that it's on a par with what Ferrari pay Michael Schumacher to drive for them (we're talking millions of pounds here, non-F1 fans), and the publishers obviously felt that their money was better spent elsewhere, like on game development or something. As a result, the teams and drivers in *Monaco Grand Prix 2* are completely fictitious. For

instance, the Silverstone circuit is simply referred to as the track where the British Grand Prix is held, and so on and so forth – except for the Monaco circuit, which is called the er... the Monaco Grand Prix, which is rather odd considering the publishers obviously shoved a hefty wedge of cash to the ACM (Automobile Club de Monaco) to flash their logo on the box. What strange times we live in.

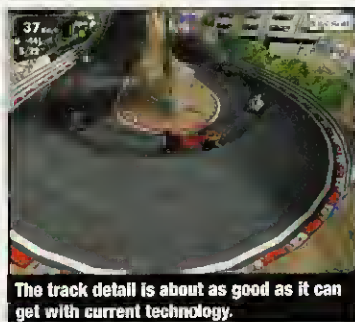
Anyway, if you can live with the fact that M Schmidter or whoever drives for the team with the red car, then all is well and good. You can alter the driver and team names yourself using the in-game editor if it matters that much to you, and the graphics editor means that you can even add all the relevant insignia and logos if you've got the time or inclination. No doubt some anally retentive bloke from Wales will release a complete 'unofficial'

patch and stick it on the Net in a matter of days anyway. Suffice to say if we come across it we'll keep you posted.

IT'S A... IT'S A... IT'S A SIM

The first thing you realise when you 'play' *Monaco Grand Prix Racing Simulation 2* is that it's not a game but, like it says on the box, a simulation. In this respect, you don't just play it, you learn how to play it. There's an 'easy' mode, but believe me this is just a term the developers have used to distinguish it from the 'realistic' mode. Don't expect to boot up and clock up a record lap – it just won't happen. This means it won't be for everybody. If you want an F1 arcade game, then go play *F1 97*. In the words of Jarvis Cocker, this is hard-core. But if you're even remotely interested in motor racing it's also a very compelling sim.

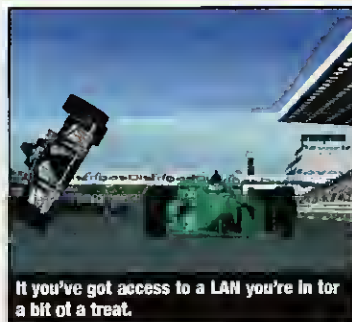
If you're new to this F1 lark



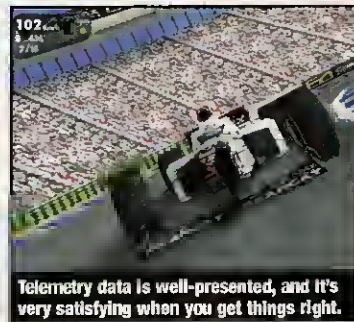
The track detail is about as good as it can get with current technology.



Select 'easy', keep the driver aids on, and you might compete a lap first time round.



If you've got access to a LAN you're in for a bit of a treat.



Telemetry data is well-presented, and it's very satisfying when you get things right.

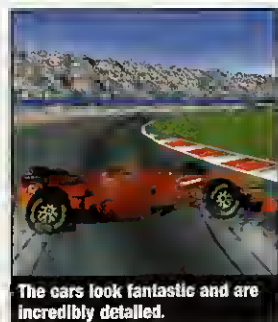


Stay on the black and out of the green. Or something.

RACE WHATEVER THE WEATHER

As is the norm nowadays in Formula One games, there are different weather modes to race in. In *Monaco Grand Prix 2* you can opt for sunny, cloudy, rainy or random. When the sun is shining the track is hot and your car will stick to the track like chocolate on a toddler's face. As soon as it rains however, it's time to ditch the slicks and bolt on your wets – you'll need all the help you can get just to stay on the tarmac. As the great Murray Walker might say, the rain is a great leveller in Formula One, but it also makes things bloody difficult. It has to be said, it looks nice though.

you'll be pleased to hear that there are numerous training modes that teach you all about cornering, gear changing and so on, and the manual does a very good job of explaining how different car set-ups and telemetry can shave seconds off your lap times. If you're interested in the technical side of things then you'll be well and truly happy, because you can literally spend days messing around with the aerodynamics, engine,



The cars look fantastic and are incredibly detailed.



The cars look fantastic and are incredibly detailed. It's just a shame they don't disintegrate more when you crash them.



It doesn't just look good, it sounds good too thanks to realistic 3D sound.



There are 11 car designs (one per team), each with their own characteristics.

gearbox and suspension set-ups. The telemetry data is actually very well represented (in fact, I almost felt as though I knew what I was doing) and it's incredibly satisfying when you get things right.

As far as features go, it's all pretty standard and not too dissimilar from the original game. In addition to Training, Single Race, Grand Prix, Time Attack and Championship, there are now Scenario and Career modes, plus the rather nice Retro that enables you to race four different cars from the '50s around some very tricky circuits. The graphics are a lot nicer this time round, and if you've got 3D hardware in your machine you're in for a real treat. This is undoubtedly one of the best-looking racing games ever to grace the PC. Overall, the standard of presentation is excellent. And although there are a lot of menus to access,

navigating your way through the game is by no means a chore.

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

As well as looking better, the driver AI has been improved and drivers now go out of their way to try and avoid you, even when you're hugging the racing line. They are also bloody quick, so you'll really have to go some to get on the podium. New rules have also been added which means you see little marshals around the track waving flags as you tear past. There are also now two tyre brands, only one support car per team, and the 107 per cent rule in qualifying now applies. In multiplayer mode you can actually qualify in real time, which makes things a little more exciting and realistic, while the split-screen mode means that two people can play on one machine, although you may need to look at your graphics set-up to

keep the frame rate from suffering too much.

All in all it's a worthy sequel, and it's clear the developers have really pulled out all the stops in an effort to make it as realistic as possible. If you're a fan of the original game, there's enough here to justify spending another 35 quid – and there aren't many sequels you can say that about, are there? **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Great graphics and loads of attention to detail • Nice 'Retro' race mode • Cool 'Scenarios' mode • Complete map editor included
DOWNERS No commentary • RAM hungry • Fictitious teams and drivers

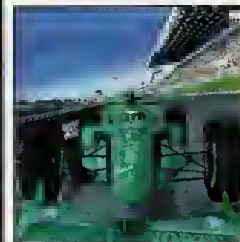
92 Best F1 sim around if you edit the drivers and teams

EIGHT GOOD, 22 BAD

If you want to run *Monaco Grand Prix 2* in all its graphical glory you're going to need a kick-arse PC

We tested *Monaco Grand Prix 2* on a number of different spec machines with varying results. It ran well enough on a P133 with 32Mb of RAM and a Voodoo2 card, and flew on a P166 with 64Mb and a Voodoo2 card (but then, what wouldn't?).

Thankfully, you can toggle the graphical options to suit your machine, and adjusting the horizon and car detail helps you squeeze out an extra few frames per second. However, if you want to keep the frame rate and detail high, then undoubtedly the best thing to do is cut the number of opponents. On a P166 with 32Mb of RAM and a Voodoo2 card it's jerk-o-rama when you're racing against 21 other drivers. Halve that number, or cut it down to just eight, and it runs fine. It's a bit of a trade-off, but at least if you come last you can say that you came eighth instead of twenty-second.



Turn down the car detail, bring the horizon closer and lose some drivers to keep the frame rate acceptable.

ACTUA TENNIS

★ £39.99 • Gremlin Interactive • Out now

Finally, a net game from Gremlin that you don't need a modem to play (ha ha).

Jeremy Wells lobs one over Martina Hingis

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** PowerVR, 3Dfx and all major 3D graphics accelerator cards **WE SAY** At least a P166 with 32Mb of RAM, a 3D accelerator card and two Microsoft SideWinder joypads



Actua Tennis is the first game in Gremlin's Actua series to use their new Actua Sports 3D engine. Which is nice.

**PCZONE
RECOMMENDED**

ALSO CONSIDER

Pete Sampras Tennis

(Codemasters, £12.99) A great tennis game with some very colourful characters and nice touches, but it is starting to look a bit dated and lacks 3D hardware support. **PCZ #64, 88%**

Game, Net & Match (Blue Byte, £39.99) This has loads of options and is good online, but it still lacks that certain 'something'. And it doesn't really cut it in the graphics stakes, either. **PCZ #66, 80%**

Tennis Elbow (Goto Informatique, £19.95) Cheap, but it's also pretty nasty. So unless you're really strapped for cash... Then again, go out and buy a tennis ball and two bits of wood and play over your neighbour's fence. **PCZ #54, 72%**

It goes without saying that tennis games, along with footie games, are arguably the most fun you and a friend can have after a night down the local boozer without the risk of throwing up suspicions with regards to your sexuality. Crack open a can of Stella, daisy-chain a couple of gamepads, and you're quickly transported to a magical land where running around after a ball is effortless and fun. And if

new Actua Sports 3D engine. In terms of graphics, this is quite possibly the best-looking tennis game to appear on the PC. The character models are detailed and solid, and the animation is impressively fluid. The ten different stadiums and courts are equally well-conceived, and as usual the commentary – from *Actua Soccer's* Barry Davies, who is joined by Pat Cash and Sue Barker – is top-notch.

“Possibly the best-looking tennis game on the PC. However, the graphical lushness comes at a price: unless your PC has a 3Dfx or PowerVR card, it can get sluggish”

you get thrashed by your mate, you can easily blame: a) your gamepad, b) your player's lack of skill and speed, or c) the computer's dodgy line calls and erratic artificial intelligence.

Actua Tennis is Gremlin's latest release in their Actua Sports series, and is the first game to use their rather posh

COURT IN THE ACT

As you'd expect from a tennis game, there are numerous game options, ranging from a full-blown World Tournament where you play at each of the locations around the world in an attempt to become the world Number One, to a Quick Match option, which selects a court and opponent at random and throws you straight into a game. Match types include men's and women's singles and doubles, and mixed doubles.

Up to four people can play over a LAN, or on one PC if you daisy-chain four gamepads. There's also the option to play using Wireplay over a modem link. Two-player games are arguably the best, whether it's singles or doubles. It's quite hard to become the world's Number One (obviously), and some of the computer players are very difficult to beat, throwing a wide range of shots at you and regularly serving up some wicked spinning returns if your serve is weak. A useful and pretty successful tactic is to stay put on

the base line and wait for them to mess up – which they eventually do. It's a shame there isn't any kind of noticeable fatigue stat in there somewhere which punishes players who whizz about the court like a cat on the proverbial hot tin roof, as this would bring in a much-needed tactical element.

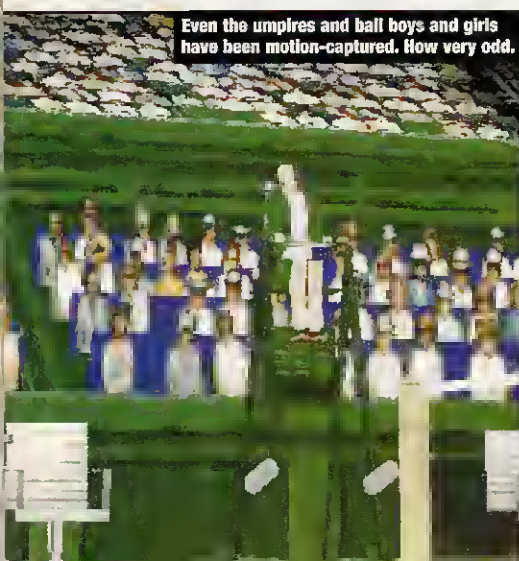
CAN YOU HIT IT? YES YOU CAN

As far as tennis games go, gameplay and control are everything. It can look spectacular, but if it doesn't feel right then you might as well go back to playing *Pong*. *Actua Tennis* certainly looks the part and, thankfully, plays well enough, with the range of shots available being by no means inadequate.

The speed at which the players move around the court can be a little frustrating to the novice. At first they seem downright sluggish one moment, and then seem to glide across the court the next. But once you've settled into the rhythm of the game it becomes a lot more acceptable. (It may be something to do with the motion-captured animation trying to catch up with your controller demands.)

Essentially, this is how quickly the players move, so get used to it. Too quick is just as bad as too slow, after all. Maybe a toggle speed option similar to that in *World Cup '98* (PCZ #65, 91%) and Gremlin's own forthcoming *Actua Soccer 3* (see preview on page 58) would have been a good idea.

All in all, *Actua Tennis* is adequate in that it's both playable and fun, but it's not what you'd call spectacular. Players don't



Even the umpires and ball boys and girls have been motion-captured. How very odd.



The choice of shots on offer is impressive, though you'll need a decent joypad to pull off some of the trickier 'Super' shots.

seem to improve after a few seasons as they do in *Game, Net & Match* (PCZ #66, 80%), and there are no comedy characters as seen in *Pete Sampras Tennis* (PCZ #64, 88%).

If you don't own a tennis game, this is the one to buy if your hardware is up to it. Like most tennis games, *Actua Tennis* is great two-player fun in that it's not a game you'll play all the time, but probably one you'll keep going back to. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

- UPPERS** Great graphics and animation • Loads of options • Addictive gameplay • Great two-player game
- DOWNERS** Serious hardware requirements • Player movement a little erratic • Pal Cash is still a very annoying human being

84 It's rather good, but it ain't the best tennis game ever



There are five different camera angles to choose from, and a further 17 which are used for replays.



There are ten stadiums from around the globe to play in.



Up to four players can play over a network, or on one machine using four daisy-chained gamepads.



The serve system is pretty easy to get the hang of, and there is the facility to try and correct it if you mess up.



The players have all been motion-captured using 'real' tennis pros. The way they walk around the court, you'd think they'd used John Inman.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK LIKE?

Design your players' physical attributes, and also decide what they're going to wear

Just as in *Actua Golf*, *Actua Tennis* enables you to generate your very own player. Although you can't opt to deck your player out in designer pimpwear, you can select the colour and pattern of your player's shorts and top, choose the deepness of his or her tan, and even add a hat or sun visor for when you're not playing in the rain at Wimbledon.

Of course, this facility is just a bit of fun (ha ha), but Gremlin have taken it a stage further and incorporated the facility to change the build and stature of your player. As well as having a damn good laugh creating Joe Pesci and Sandy Toksvig lookalikes and seeing them try to peg it around the court, there is also a serious side to it all. The taller your player, the easier it is for him/her to serve, but they lack physical strength and therefore can't hit the ball as hard. Similarly, a beefy player will be able to hit the ball harder than a player with the physique of Charles Hawtry, but will not be as sprightly. Get the balance right and you'll end up creating a player that looks like... well, just like Pete Sampras, who can dash around the court at a fair old lick and whack the ball with the precision and pace of an Exocet missile.

In all fairness, it doesn't really affect how your player performs too much (that's up to you), but it is a nice little feature nevertheless. Hopefully, future sports games in the *Actua* series will also sport such an innovative and potentially chucklesome feature.



Built like a brick shit-house with all the speed and grace of a portly llama.

GRAND PRIX LEGENDS

★ £39.99 • Sierra • Out October

Is nostalgia a thing of the past? The legendary Steve Hill buffs his helmet

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 with 3D card, 233 without **Memory** 32Mb RAM

SUPPORTS All major 3D cards (native support for 3Dfx and Rendition chipsets)

WE SAY And then some

PCZONE CLASSIC

ALSO CONSIDER

FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX 2

(MicroProse, £29.99) The grandfather of Grand Prix games, this is now starting to look its age.

PCZ #36, 95%

F1 RACING SIMULATION (Ubi Soft,

£44.99) A surprise success from those French sorts at Ubi Soft.

PCZ #59, 93%

F1 97 (Psygnosis, £29.99) More

arcade-oriented action, but still certainly worth a look.

PCZ #62, 92%

“The year is 1967, before compulsory aerofoils made racing safer. Back then, cars were rockets on wheels”

In general, the received wisdom is that the olden days were great. Music was better, football was better (despite being played by chain-smoking pissants) and, of course, motor racing was better, allegedly enjoying some kind of mythical golden age. Untainted by multimillion-pound corporate sponsorships and gratuitous endorsements, racing was pure, a marriage of man and machine in a battle against an unforgiving – and often lethal – race track.

These days, of course, the sport almost resembles a parade of 200mph cigarette packets, with victory clearly going to the best car, as the numerous recent successes of Mika Hakkinen would appear to confirm.

That's what they want you to think anyway, and *Grand Prix Legends* is the antithesis of the anodyne world that is today's GP circuit, taking you back to the aforementioned golden age. The year is 1967, the season before compulsory aerofoils were brought into play in order to make racing safer. Back then, the cars were pretty much rockets on



Drive like that on a public highway and you'd deserve to be called a raving maniac.

wheels, derring-do prevailed over aerodynamic ergonomics, and violent death was more of an occupational hazard than a tragic accident. Spectators also clearly attended at their own risk, as beheading was a real possibility, with great swathes of the crowd often eliminated in spectacular fashion.

HILL BEHAVIOUR

Due to the portentous title of the game – and the lack of any tangible information – we mistakenly assumed that *Grand Prix Legends* would be some kind of fantasy affair encompassing true legends of the likes of James

Hunt, Niki Lauda, Ayrton Senna, Alain Prost et al. What we actually have is simply the 1967 Grand Prix season, and although Graham Hill (no relation), Jack Brabham, Jim Clark and John Surtees are clearly up there among the greats, can, say, Richie Ginther really stake a claim to being the last of the famous international playboys?

Whatever, the 1967 season it is, recreated in frighteningly authentic detail, to the extent that several members of the development team had televisions mounted by their computers, running a video of the quintessential late-1960s racing film *Grand Prix*, a movie that provided a lot of inspiration for the game. They have certainly succeeded in capturing the romantic feel of the era, encapsulated by cigarette-shaped cars, flamboyant facial hair and rudimentary safety precautions. All of the tracks – some of which no longer exist – have been replicated as accurately as possible (some constitute little more than public roads adorned with a couple of bales of hay), making for a real seat-of-the-pants experience.

CAR TROUBLE

The actual cars – Ferrari, Brabham, Lotus and so forth – have also been extensively modelled, and the handling is

unforgiving to say the least. *Grand Prix Legends* is clearly entering the realms of the serious simulation, and anyone seeking instant arcade thrills would be advised to look elsewhere (an arcade, perhaps?). *Mario Kart* this isn't. It's an immensely difficult game to master, and at first the slightest tweak of the wheel inevitably leads to a violent spin. This definitely isn't a game you can get to grips with in your lunch hour, drunk or otherwise.

Incidentally, do not even consider playing *Grand Prix Legends* with a digital controller; this is one case where analogue rules. It's just about playable with the keyboard, although there's clearly no dignity in this course of action, but for the full effect a decent steering wheel is recommended (we found the ThrustMaster Grand Prix 1 pretty useful).

Absolutely no quarter is given; braking has to be spot-on, and accelerating into each bend is a must. This inevitably leads to numerous crashes, which can prove frustrating but ultimately inspire you to try harder. To make any kind of progress, you have to drive on an absolute knife-edge, pushing your car to its limit. The racing line has never seemed more important (apart from the Channel Four horse tips programme of the same name) and clinging to it is essential, not

★ WALKTHROUGH

THE CAR IS A-BURNING

If you don't slow down you're going to crash. Mark my words...



1 Oh my God...



2 ...Oh Jesus Christ...



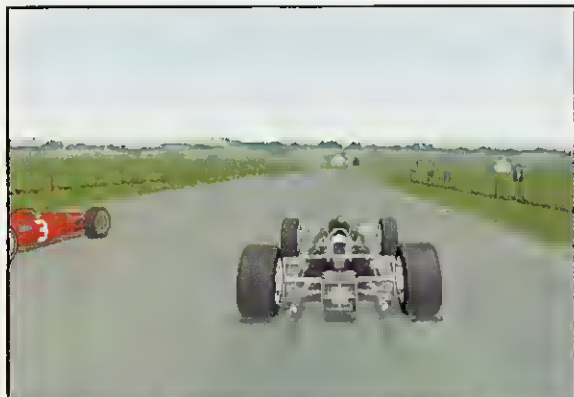
3 ...Oh no...



4 ...God...



5 Nooooo!!!



A possible overtaking opportunity, destined to end in tears.



This clown clearly has little regard for his own personal safety.

only to make good time but simply to stay on the track. *Grand Prix Legends* is a commitment, and weeks of constant play are essential in order to become anything approaching competitive. Concentration is imperative, with the slightest intrusion of inane banter enough to have you slewing all over the road.

ONLY THE LONELY

So, we've established that it's a bit tricky. This is a trait of all Papyrus games, though, as the *IndyCar* and *NASCAR* titles confirmed, proving almost unplayable by all but the most dedicated of gamers. Papyrus have clearly set their stall out with *Grand Prix Legends*, as a glance at the car set-up options confirms, featuring all manner of drivetrain adjustments, suspension tweaks and tyre pressure tomfoolery that only the loneliest of men would dare investigate. If you're the kind of player who struggles to decide what colour buggy you prefer, this may be a little too daunting. For the hardcore fan, though, the rewards are legion. Having achieved some kind of competence, it's an immensely satisfying game, and earning your first Grand Prix points is a truly momentous occasion.

Graphically, it's clearly up to scratch, but it's the little touches

that make the difference, such as independent suspension and the car leaving the ground when negotiating a rise. It really feels as though you're there, and the cockpit mode is utterly terrifying, with the fear kicking in as soon as a rival car is spotted in your wing mirror.

Once mastered, it's a very exciting game, and there is a definite adrenaline rush to be had in tearing around some tracks that have clearly not been designed with safety in mind. Once you've got past the stage of crashing every ten seconds, the game will suck you in, and the World Championship becomes an enthralling ongoing saga, with a comprehensive replay mode enabling you to watch the action from any car and any angle.

So, *Grand Prix Legends* is very hard. But if you can handle the pace, it's rock 'n' roll, it's Steve McQueen... it's a very good virtual reality computer game. **PCZ**

PCZVERDICT

UPPERS It's very authentic

• Very atmospheric

DOWNERS The learning curve is arguably too difficult

90 *Legends* delivers rock-hard authentic Sixties racing



Being pissed up on booze clearly doesn't help matters.



The cockpit view enables you to look left and right, as well as stick your arm in the air.



A comprehensive editing suite enables you to create and save highlights.

TRACKS OF MY TEARS

The World Championship takes place over 11 circuits, all accompanied by the original poster from the time. Which is nice.



KYALAMI

South Africa provides the exotic setting for the opening race, with some fast straights interspersed with quite a few deceptive bends.



MONACO

Still in use today, overtaking is at a premium on this extremely tight street circuit. The scenery's definitely worth a look though.



ZANDVOORT

Holland is next up, with the typically flat terrain making for some large swooping turns and probably something about dykes.



SPA-FRANCOR CHAMPS

The Spa-Francor Champs – an epic track, set deep in the woodlands of Belgium – is still one of the most testing and exciting on the circuit.



ROUEN

French. Another rather tight affair, the Rouen track is clearly flanked by garlic-eating cyclists wearing stripy tops. Bwahaha!



SILVERSTONE

The classic British track is largely unchanged from that of today, with the obvious exception of the safety precautions.



NURBURGRING

A ludicrous track, buried somewhere in a German forest, it twists and turns for the best part of 15 miles. Avoid punctures.



MOSPORT PARK

The Canadian outback provides the setting for Mosport Park, and some wide open spaces make for plenty of overtaking tomfoolery.



MONZA

This tight Italian track has some deceptive turns, and in common with West Ham United, the crowd are very close to the pitch.



WATKINS GLEN

Some kind of happy commune in the 1960s, this US track is nevertheless home to some frantic action.



MEXICO

The season reaches its climax in the sweltering South American heat, this track featuring a tricky hairpin.

REDJACK

Swashbuckling Adventure
of Betrayal & Revenge

REVENGE OF THE BRETHREN



"The animations are superb." • "Good mixture of traditional problem-solving and interactive puzzles."

PC REVIEW MAGAZINE

"Racy, colourful, stylish and original." • "Spectacular movie segments."

MAC FORMAT MAGAZINE

"The movie sequences are excellent." • "A great introduction to adventuring and refreshingly different."

PC GAMING WORLD MAGAZINE



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SENSIBLE SOCCER EUROPEAN CLUB EDITION

★ £29.99 • GT Interactive • Out now

Footie fever is upon us once again, with the arrival of the latest *Sensi*. Being the largest, *Steve Hill* won the fight to review it

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** Yes, it runs fine on a P133 with 16Mb RAM

PCZONE CLASSIC

Barely three months after the much delayed *Sensible Soccer '98* finally appeared, the obligatory club edition is already upon us. Some may look upon this as piss-taking on an EA scale, but who are we to judge? It's all marketing; we're just here to tell you whether it's actually any good. And of course it is, as the big red number currently invading your peripheral vision at the bottom of the page confirms.

Despite all the graphical enhancements, it's still *Sensible Soccer*, the original Amiga incarnation of which is still arguably the greatest football game ever made. Clearly, *Sensi* is looking a lot better these days, but the crucial factors that originally made it such a success have remained largely intact. The top-down view enables you to see who you're passing to, the controls are responsive, you can get plenty of purchase on the ball, and the damage to your thumbs is tangible.

So what's new? Well, all the options for one thing, with the game featuring the top divisions

of England, Scotland, Italy, France, Germany, Holland and Spain, as well as a host of other crack European sides. There is undoubtedly value to be had in taking charge of your favourite team, and this is amply catered for — unless, of course, you have the misfortune of supporting some two-bit shit-kicking lower-division outfit.

But for those not burdened with such despair, entire seasons can be played out, and *Sensi European Club Edition* also features the three major European competitions, replete with the correct first-round draws and Champions League groups. And if you fancy yourself at

the changes are negligible. The major difference is that the play is far smoother than before. *Sensible Soccer '98* was a decent game, but in all fairness it was let down by jerk-o-vision. This has now been remedied, apparently by simply changing one variable — an incident that just goes to show what a random business this crazy mixed-up world of games is. The new-found smoothness has a knock-on effect on the gameplay, and it

“Data was being collated right up until the game was mastered, with Ruud Gullit's supplanting of Kenny Dalglish at Newcastle just making the deadline”

international level, you can start by trying to qualify for Euro 2000, again with the actual groups.

Accuracy is everything, and data was being collated right up until the game was mastered, with Ruud Gullit's supplanting of Kenny Dalglish at Newcastle just making the deadline, along with any recent transfers. Player names are still deliberately misspelt though, this being a legal issue which really should be sorted out. What *is* the point? We're on the verge of armageddon, engulfed in misery and squalor, yet some people have nothing better to do than quibble about using real names in a virtual reality computer game. It's a farce.

The graphics have improved since the last incarnation, although to the untrained eye



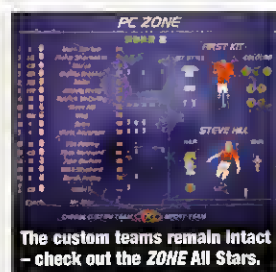
The referee only appears in cut-scenes, and it's rarely good news.



The classic top-down view has been maintained. Of course.



Use the comprehensive tactics screen to tweak your team to the max.



The custom teams remain intact — check out the ZONE All Stars.



There are loads of different pitch surfaces and everything.

is now easier to stroke the ball around with confidence, making defending a viable option, as well as encouraging flamboyant headers and volleys.

Ultimately, there's plenty to keep loners busy, and for a swift multiplayer tournament it still produces the goods. Some things never change. It's *Sensi*. It rocks. But you already knew that. **PCZ**

PCZVERDICT

UPPERS It's *Sensi* • It's as smooth as an eel

DOWNERS Bastardised player names

90

It's *Sensi* and it rocks. Need we say more?

ALSO CONSIDER

WORLD CUP 98 (EA Sports, £39.99) Put yourself through the agony again with EA's best effort to date. **PCZ #85, 91%**

ACTUA SOCCER 2 (Grenlin, £39.99) Recommended, but wait for *Actua 3* instead. **PCZ #59, 90%**



Action replays are again shown in 'glorious' 3D.

POLICE QUEST: SWAT 2

★ £34.99 • Sierra • Out now

Who gets the chance to put on a black hood, pick up a Heckler & Koch and waste some terrorists? Why, it's **Andrew Wright**

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRED** Windows-compatible sound card and 1Mb video card **WE SAY** 16-bit graphics card and P200 or faster recommended

This is the latest in a long line of *Police Quest* games, and the second version of *SWAT* – short for Special Weapons And Tactics – police simulation. To earn its number two tag, it's gone from turn-based to real-time, and gives you the chance to play the bad guys as well as the LAPD's elite task force.

First off, you select your team, either officers or terrorists, equip them with your choice of weapons and equipment, and then leap into the first two training missions. Once they are out of the way, the full campaign of 13 further missions on each side starts to unfold. The unscripted AI controlling both sides means they play slightly differently every time, but it has a few problems.

All the later missions are cleverly put together, and some are a real challenge, despite occasional strange behaviour by non-player characters. Other missions aren't: I accidentally left mission seven running for five

minutes and returned to find I'd almost completed it without any instructions whatsoever. Okay, the score was only mediocre, but the bad guys had come running out and the police had shot them. Bang. End of story.

The real-time engine is only average, and the graphics are disappointing. Most characters have only two positions – kneeling or standing – and their size means you can't really tell what you're up against. A man standing there looking vacant and unarmed can suddenly produce a shotgun and start firing.

Your men return fire if attacked but they won't do much else. This leads to silly situations

“Would you rather say ‘LAPD! You’re under arrest!’ or waste the bastard?”

where, for example, five heavily armed cops can watch a suspect wander around a room and disappear out through a door.

If you've got a dozen officers sealing off the area and a couple of assault teams in a building, it



can get to be too much – events happen too quickly for you to react as you'd like.

them, however, because they can spoil the game.

Unfortunately, the restrictions placed on the police officers' behaviour won't appeal to the blood-and-guts brigade. As a law enforcement officer you've got to preserve life and play by the book, and only shoot if threatened. Even if you play as a terrorist, random shootings or gun battles with the Old Bill earn you little. It's a bit like playing *Commandos* in a straitjacket – you want to kick ass but you can't because you'll never make the next mission.

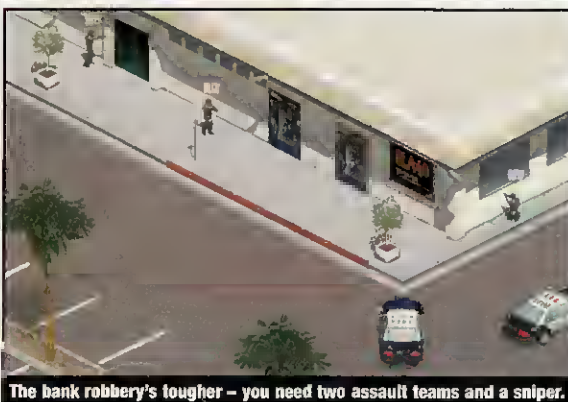
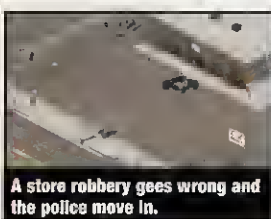
Both sides have a wonderful array of weapons, but the SWAT team's rules of engagement take away any real excitement. In *SWAT 2* you've got to be a boring bugger and do it right. It might be

realistic and well put-together, but it's just a bit dull. Games like *Commandos* or *X-COM 3: Apocalypse* let you do what you like – sneak around or go in with both barrels blazing, whatever your choice. I mean, what would you rather do – say “LAPD! You're under arrest!” or waste the sod? Answers on a postcard. **PCZ #52, 95%**

ALSO CONSIDER

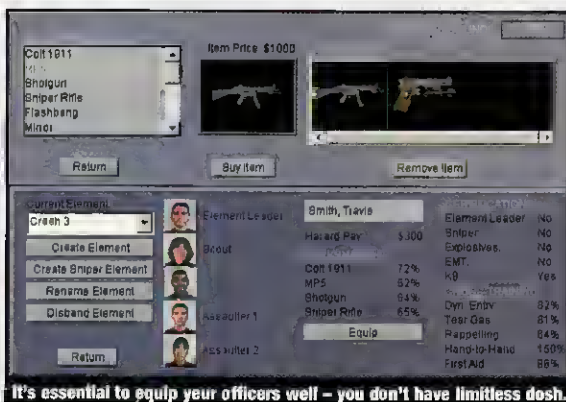
X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE (MicroProse, £34.99) Better storyline, better graphics, loads of weapon options and total freedom to act as you please. **PCZ #52, 95%**

COMMANDOS: BEHIND ENEMY LINES (Eidos Interactive, £34.99) More freedom of action despite emphasis on stealth, but there's no weapon choice or pre-mission planning. **PCZ #66, 87%**



CAN'T SHOOT, WON'T SHOOT

SWAT 2 is certainly a big leap forward, and if you're into chess-like strategy and the softly-sottly approach you'll love it. It's pretty realistic, with a good manual, and it even includes strategic tips for each mission. Resist looking at



PCZ VERDICT

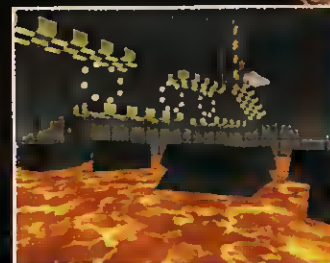
UPPERS Realistic tactics • Clever scenarios

DOWNERS Frustrating interface • Tedious rules of engagement • Weird AI

68 Strictly for *Police Quest* fans only

MONTENZUMA'S RETURN!

A first-person real-time 3D action adventure game



First console style 3D-action game for PC designed to be played in a true 3D perspective – where you have to look and move in every direction.

Combining all the best elements of adventure games – jumping-climbing-fighting, all wrapped up and spiced with humour.

Massive levels and bonus rounds full of challenging 3D puzzles and comic fighting sequences against a horde of unique enemies and bosses.

Includes FREE original 8-bit version of Montezuma's Revenge. A retro-gaming classic.

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Web Site:
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UTOPIA
TECHNOLOGIES INC

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Take 2 Interactive Software, Hogarth House, 29-31 Great Street, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK4 1BY, UK

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF

★ £39.99 • EA Sports • Out now

Golf, a game stereotypically played by sad, lonely, boring blokes. Looks like a job for Craig Vaughan

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Most 3D cards, network, modem and Internet play **WE SAY** Try a P200 with 64Mb RAM

PCZONE CLASSIC

EA arguably already have the best 3D engine (and the best golf game too) in the form of *PGA Tour Pro* (PCZ #55, 94%), and they've made further refinements here. You won't see a smoother or faster 3D engine anywhere. EA reckon you can complete 18 holes in half an hour. It took me slightly longer, but the point is still well made. There's nothing worse than spending five seconds hitting a shot, and then having to wait ten times that for the screen to redraw. Here, progress is (almost) instantaneous except between holes, where there's an inevitable delay (short though it is). The graphics are near photo-realistic too, even without 3D acceleration.

EA are past masters at style, content and presentation, and

they don't disappoint here, providing a multitude of options. Golf virgins are able to 'quick-play' using all the default options; simulation freaks will revel in the ability to tweak near-infinite aspects of the game, including difficulty, club selection, player statistics, weather and course conditions. The reckless will dive straight in to a full tournament against seven other PGA professionals, and will no doubt get slaughtered as a result. Two rather more sedate options are Match play, which pairs you off playing for points, or Skins, which has you competing for cash. There's also a four-ball option where two teams of two compete, and the whole package is neatly rounded off with Foursomes.

FORE!

Into the game proper, and your first task is to choose one of the three exclusive PGA courses available (Pebble Beaches, Sawgrass or Summerlin) which

are apparently authentically recreated. Then select which one of eight pros to 'be', Tiger Woods included. Tiger pops up throughout the game anyway, occasionally chipping in (sorry) with useful tips, rewarding good shots and encouraging safe or aggressive play. All the players look wonderful, if a little detached from the scenery, and their movement has been captured superbly. Standing on the tee, the second thing you notice (after the graphics) is the 'trajectory arc'. This gizmo is extendable and retractable by using the mouse, and indicates where your shot is likely to end up. As you tinker with the arc, the game automatically changes your club for you as the projected distance to be travelled alters. Using the handy on-screen map, you can line up your shot and get ready to thwack the ball.

"I doubt that you'll see a smoother or faster 3D engine anywhere"

Here EA have utilised the standard three-click mouse control: tap once to activate the swing, again to set speed (and hence distance obtained), and a third time to make sure you don't bugger it all up with a hook or a slice. EA have added another control option, which proves to be both innovative and intuitive: you still use the mouse, but physically move it to increase the power applied to the shot. It's weird, but it works a treat.

Having hit the shot, the 'picture in picture' camera kicks in and, regardless of which



Brad Faxon prepares to tee off on a rather dark and miserable-looking morning.

camera you've selected, you get a spectacular in-flight view of your ball as it careers toward the hole. You can either strap a camera to the ball or admire your shot as it speeds past the galleries or camera towers. Whichever method you favour, you notice that the ball mechanics are wonderfully recreated – it sounds like a ball when you hit it, and it acts like a ball in the air. On the greens, putting is assisted with the obligatory on-screen grid overlay, which shows the lie of the land and enables you to putt with ease.

The package is completed with multiplayer support (network, Internet and LAN), atmospheric ambient sound, and subtle but informative in-game commentary. You can also make use of the upgrade disc provided, which is compatible with previous *PGA Pro* games' courses and will breathe a new lease of life into them. Failing that, you can buy the usual plethora of upcoming course discs.

Where golf games go from here is anyone's guess, but for now at least this is the definitive golf simulation. It's as complete and comprehensive a package as you could ever wish for. Buy it, even if you've got the others. **PCZ**

ALSO CONSIDER

PGA TOUR PRO (EA Sports, £34.99) Previously, this was the best example of the genre, now it's been relegated to second place.

PCZ #55, 94%

LINKS LS (Eidos Interactive, £39.99) Long-running competitor to the *PGA* series. Excellent graphics enhance an option-filled game, but it lacks the finesse and polish of the *PGA* series.

PCZ #43, 94%

THE GOLF PRO (Empire Interactive, £39.99) The game we thought would never be released. Full of helpful in-game tuition, and with fine graphics. Only the poor putting interface drags it down.

PCZ #62, 90%

TIGER'S GOLF PROS



Tiger Woods
PGA Tour
Player of the
Year in 1997,
and leading money winner.



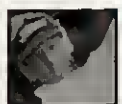
Lee Janzen
US Open
winner in 1993
and 1998, and
has eight PGA Tour victories.



Mark O'Meara
1998 Masters
winner and
British Open Champion. Has
15 PGA Tour victories.



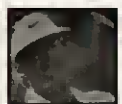
Davis Love
PGA Tour
Champion in
1997, and has
12 PGA Tour victories.



Brad Faxon
Has five PGA
Tour victories
to his name.



Tom Kite
Winner of the
1992 US Open
and has 19
PGA Tour victories.



Peter Jacobson
Has six PGA
Tour victories
under his belt.



Craig Stadler
US Masters
Champion in
1982, and has
12 PGA Tour victories.



"Don't shoot!"

PCZ VERDICT

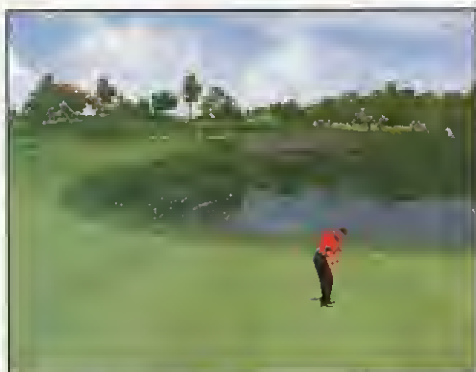
UPPERS Fast and fluid 3D engine • Multitude of game options • Three PGA Tour courses • Cracking multiplayer facilities • Play as eight PGA pros

DOWNERS People in silly clothes

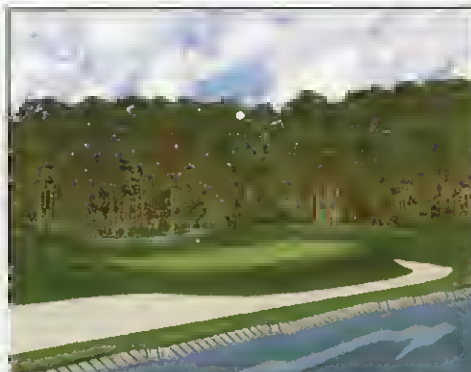
93 The final word
in golf games



A wonderful example of the lushness of the in-game graphics. Notice the trees reflected on the water.



Tiger attempts to avoid the water. You wouldn't want to be the poor bugger who has to cut all that grass!



A shot clears the water hazard and heads straight for the green.



Tiger Woods thracks the ball over a water hazard.



Tiger hits over a sand hazard and into the lead.



A cracking good shot heads straight for the flag.



Tiger celebrates in front of a packed public gallery.

200,000
situps
540 miles in
full
gear...

101st Airborne in Normandy

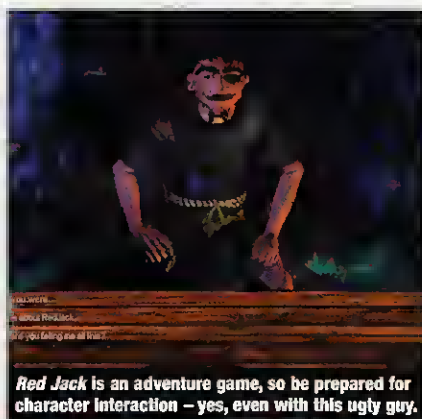
June 6, 1944:

The eve of D-day,
troops of the 101st Airborne
were ordered to parachute
behind enemy lines
and stop the German
re-inforcements from
reaching the
beaches of Normandy



empire
INTERACTIVE

www.empirestrategy.co.uk
tel: 0181 343 9143



RED JACK

REVENGE OF THE BRETHREN

★ £34.99 • T*HQ • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM
WE SAY Sounds adequate to us

The bell may well be tolling for adventure games, but in tossing this little curio into a volatile market, T*HQ would appear to be oblivious to the trend – although clearly not as oblivious as they are to the concept of an original idea. Check this: a callow youth with a dodgy syrup wants to be a pirate. He comes across an old sea dog in a pub and is promptly set three tasks with the promise of a life on the high seas.

They might as well have called it *I Can't Believe It's Not Monkey Island*. Clearly familiar with the old adage 'plagiarism saves time', what we have is essentially a loose remake of the LucasArts classic, albeit with higher production values and less comedy (unless the word 'bastard' qualifies as mirth).

It's effectively the New Skool of Old Skool, with

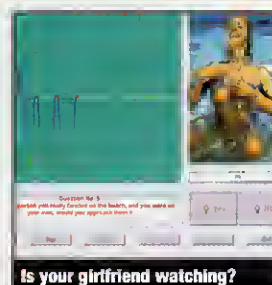
some obligatory 3D tomfoolery, and movement implemented either by cursor keys or the slightly awkward mouse business, lurching you forward in a predetermined direction. The story moves on at a reasonable – if linear – pace though, and the glib chat is interspersed with pseudo sub-games such as learning to sword fight (where have we seen that before?). Depending on your patience, these are either enjoyable diversions, or just make you angry.

There's plenty to keep you occupied – the game spans three CDs – although purists will be upset to learn that death is a fairly common occurrence in the game, necessitating regular saves – which isn't something that really has any place in an adventure game. But if you can put up with that, it's easy to kill a few hours, and if you really can't be arsed to leave the house, and you're not in the mood for hectic action, *Red Jack* could provide a viable alternative.

Steve Hill

PCZ VERDICT

75%



LIE DETECTOR

★ £19.99 • Black Friar • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX2/66 Memory 4Mb RAM **WE SAY** Don't buy it and it won't matter

PCZONE PANTS

Lie Detector is hilarious, but for all the wrong reasons. Basically, all you do is strap a sensor to your index finger and answer a series of yes/no questions. If you lie, your PC delivers an electric shock so massive that you go into spasm and thence into drool-production overdrive – to the hilarity of all present. Actually, that's a lie. What it does do in fact, is simply run a line on a graph into the red. Great.

The funniest thing is that on the box it claims to give you a 'free sensor', which goes to show that they didn't test this software on the marketing department. God help us if we had to pay extra for something that by its absence would render the 'game' useless.

The point is that there is no point to *Lie Detector*. The questions are pathetic for a start: "Do you consider yourself a hot lover?" Er, yes. "Would you give away trade secrets for cash?" Hmmm. "Is the size of the banana important?" I don't care, f**k off. Okay, so you can write your own questions, but so what. What they should have done is put a baseball bat in the box – at least you could use it for something useful, and you'd definitely find out who's telling the porkies.

If you're unfortunate enough to end up playing this on your own, *Lie Detector* is a worthless experience of the highest order; if you're daft enough to load it up when you've got friends round it's just embarrassing. Not in a "N'ya you lied, you really do fancy men" kind of way, but in a "You sad f**k, why d'you buy this heap of shit?" kind of way.

Avoid it like the plague. *Lie Detector* is a waste of time and money. That's the truth, but of course we could be lying (snigger).

Richie Shoemaker

PCZ VERDICT

10%



FLYING SAUCER

★ £25 • Software 2000 AG (Germany, tel +49 45 21 800 40) • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** This worked fine for us

The Germans are using heavy artillery to pummel the British into submission by translating all their old games into English and sending them over here by the truckload. *Flying Saucer* is one example – it's a game that will have die-hard PC ZONE readers gawping incredulously at less well-informed consumers who have actually paid for the thing.

The *Scooby Doo*-style intro is a bit of a clue, I guess. The '70s-style animated episode features an honest Teuton busting into Area 51 – that mythical repository of alien bric-a-brac in some Yank desert. Once our Hans witnesses the brutal treatment of our ET friends at the hands of the nasty Americans, he takes to the skies in the handy spaceship.

That's where you come in. Click around a bit in the cockpit of your saucer, familiarise yourself with your location, check your armoury, snore through your mission briefing and you're off, flying through a dodgy-looking 3D-ish landscape of hills and dots avoiding the F-15s (or whatever they are) on your tail. Even with a top Voodoo2 accelerator on board, the landscape still looks crap.

Still, there are some tasty weapons – a laser and plasma scatter gun for starters, plus more later on. Should you master the craft (the training missions are pretty necessary) you can guide your plasma weapons as well as cloak yourself in invisibility or create a doppelgänger with which to confuse your foes. Then, of course, there's the abduction system: lock on to a suitable victim and beam them aboard for a spot of interrogation. I'm sure Shaggy must be out there somewhere.

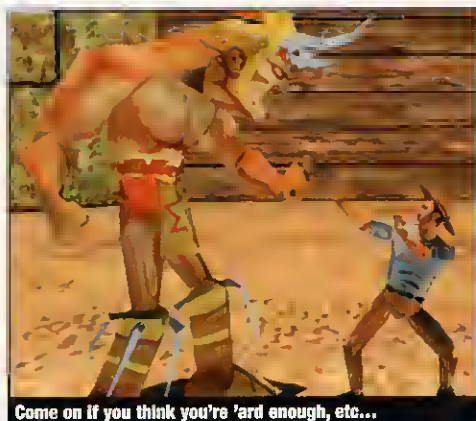
Paul Hales

PCZ VERDICT

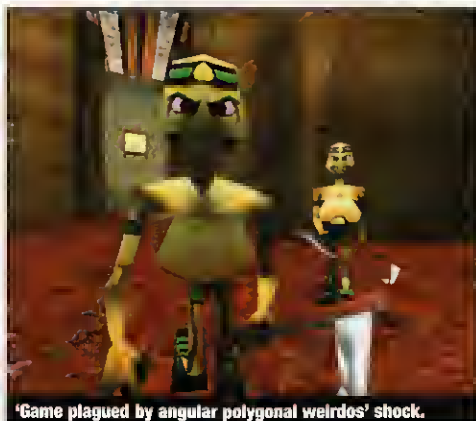
40%



Angry bloke with big hammer sets off to make short work of videogame enthusiast.



Come on if you think you're 'ard enough, etc...



'Game plagued by angular polygonal weirdos' shock.

MONTEZUMA'S RETURN

★ £34.99 • Take 2 Interactive • Out October

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM
REQUIRES 3Dfx card **WE SAY** Worked for us

After a 13-year break Max Montezuma finally makes a reappearance. He is, apparently, the only surviving descendant of King Montezuma, a veteran of the Inca wars who, in 1348, buried his vast golden fortune beneath the Aztec Grand Temple.

Our Max first had a go at retrieving the family jewels in an 8-bit incarnation on the Commodore 64 in *Montezuma's Revenge*, a version of which is also included on this disc. Now, of course, Max enjoys the delights of a 3D world, which he stumbles through encountering hundreds of hazards and coming up against zombies, aliens and deformed rodents intent on doing him damage.

Even playing the 3D accelerated version, your journey into the depths of the Inca temple is not wholly compelling. The view of your spindly legs on the opening screens as you begin your descent into the underworld is enough to scare anyone off, but once you get into the game proper

things get a lot better. You work your way through a sort of subterranean assault course and the challenges you face are imaginative but not overly taxing. You even come across some friendly inhabitants who offer advice along the way, but they're pretty few and far between. More common are the head-butting ghouls and squealing Aztec zombies who you can fight off with your fists or a well-aimed kick up the arse.

Curiously, the spindly arms and legs which provided a bit of comic relief in the intro come in handy later on when you actually use them to solve one or two of the puzzles. And the plot – restoring the tomb of your ancestors and finding the link between the Aztecs and Aliens – is bearable enough.

Despite the slightly clunky graphics – it gets a bit blocky in places – Montezuma makes a welcome return to the games arena in this imaginative and moderately humorous title, and with up to 50 hours of gameplay to plough through there's more than enough in there to give you your money's worth.

Paul Hales

PCZ VERDICT

64%

38 practice
jumps
12 miles on
his hands
and knees...



101st Airborne
in Normandy

In 101:
101st Airborne in Normandy,
you lead a group of
18 paratroopers through
multiple campaigns and
combat engagements
in this gritty
strategy simulation



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tel: 0181 343 9143



The French may be notoriously right-wing, but thankfully this BNP is a bank.



Decent rallies are shown via overhead replay tomfoolery.

ROLAND GARROS 98

★ £29.99 • Grolier Interactive • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM
SUPPORTS All major 3D cards **WE SAY** Worked fine for us

Whereas we get the inane grin of Tim 'nice but dim' Henman and the Americans get Pete 'dull as you like' Sampras, the French get Roland Garros. Following the 'success' of *Roland Garros 97*, our Gallic friends have seen fit to knock out another one, and we're not talking about masturbation.

Presumably, you're already familiar with the concept of tennis, so on to the game itself. It features four court surfaces, all of which affect the bounce of the ball differently. Standard stuff. There is a choice of 50 male and female professionals, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Again, no surprises. You can enter tournaments of varying calibres

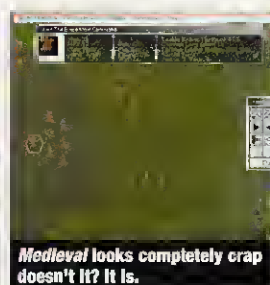
throughout the season, in an attempt to amass loads of money and ranking points. Great.

On the court, only two buttons are required, offering top-spin or a slice, with adjustments to each made with the joystick. The simplistic controls are largely a good thing, enabling you to concentrate on the tennis rather than test your manual dexterity. And it's all right. Some lengthy rallies are possible and, with practice, some varied and accurate shots can be executed. Essentially, it's No Frills tennis, eschewing fancy camera angles and graphical polish in favour of straightforward action. Inevitably, some dullard will claim that the tension of the net is slightly inaccurate, but that's not really the point. It's a no mess, no fuss game that you can pick up and play as easily as you can put it down.

Steve Hill

PCZVERDICT

70%



Medieval looks completely crap doesn't it? It is.

MEDIEVAL

★ \$49.95 • Incredible Simulations (USA, tel 001 773 804 7403) •

Out now

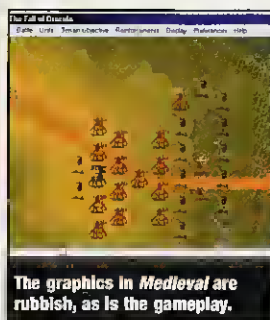
TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** You need 32Mb or more

Set in the feudal days of yore, *Medieval* recreates famous battles. Using the old classic hex model of wargaming, this game puts you in charge of medieval armies and then challenges you to outwit the computer enemy using all your strategic skills.

Unfortunately, it's rife with problems. To say that the graphics are a little minimalist would be an understatement. Four years ago, they would have been a bit dated — but today they are nothing short of a disgrace.

Of course bad graphics don't necessarily make a bad game. We're quite prepared to put up with 'functional' graphics if the



The graphics in Medieval are rubbish, as is the gameplay.

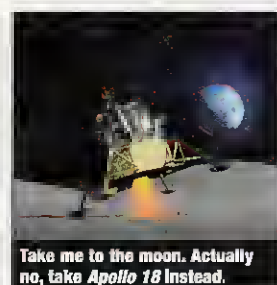
gameplay is up to scratch, but even in this area *Medieval* proves to be spectacularly incompetent. The AI (such as it is) is piss poor. Units stay in one place when it's obvious they should move, other characters retreat for no reason, and the battle doesn't develop, it decomposes.

If this game was shareware you might be tempted to spend a little time with it (*No you wouldn't* — Ed). As a commercial release though, it's an insult. At present you can only get your hands on it if you're prepared to mail-order it from the US — and hopefully it will stay that way. Avoid.

Daniel Emery

PCZVERDICT

23%



Take me to the moon. Actually no, take Apollo 18 instead.

APOLLO 18

★ £44.99 • Black Friar • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** Sounds about right

I'm getting on a bit (or so these whipper snappers around me reckon), but even I was only six when man made his debut on the moon. That trip was part of the Apollo program that ended with Apollo 17. But now, thanks to the wonders of silicon, you can embark on Apollo 18 — a secret mission back to the moon to pick up some human detritus.

Your first task in *Apollo 18* is to sit down for 30 hours or so and immerse yourself in the contents of the training disc. After that, you just may be ready to play the game proper. Try starting with take off. You're sitting there, the engines are roaring and mission control is barking commands at you. Your main 'challenge' here is to click on the right button on cue. Miss three times and the mission is aborted. Fun!

The trouble is that there are hundreds of commands, and the multitude of buttons that lie on the far-from-inspiring interface will have you flapping about in bewildered confusion. The odds against a successful take-off are high. Mind you, succeed and you will be rewarded with a little video of a pointy white tube hurtling across the sky. Cor!

The developer himself only managed three successful missions, so don't expect too much. In fact, don't expect much at all from this shoddy pile of cack. "Neil Armstrong loved it," claimed the developer bloke, "but he doesn't do product endorsements so he didn't endorse this." "Jimmy Hill," thought I, rubbing my chin.

Apollo 18 is as dull as they come, with poor graphics and a horribly anal feel about the whole thing. One for dedicated rocket scientists and space technology saddoes only.

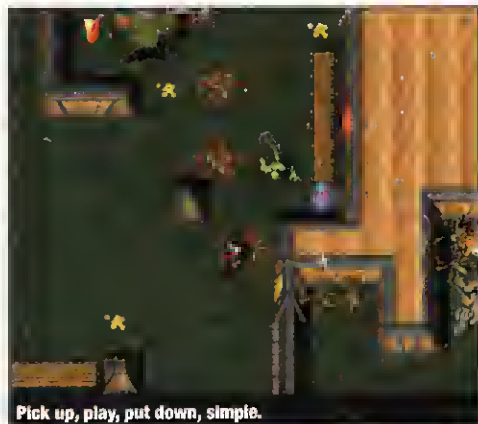
Paul Hales

PCZVERDICT

34%



As was the case with *Gauntlet*, *Get Medieval*'s simplicity is part of its charm.



Pick up, play, put down, simple.



It's a bit like *Diablo*, but not as pretty.

GET MEDIEVAL

★ £25 • Microids (France, tel 00 33 1 46 01 5401) • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY**
Worked fine for us

Simplicity. Ahh! Some games are based on a simple premise. Some have a simple interface or a simple plot, while others are made for simple people.

Get Medieval is all of these things. It's a top-down monster-blaster in which you wander around a dungeon maze trying to eliminate spiders and a bunch of unrecognisable mutant things with your sword as one of four different characters. A busty female squeals and squeals and admires her own curves. An Arnie soundalike mutters Arnieisms like: "You're about to be terminated."

Ho ho! Each has their own selection of powers: one has big muscles and an axe, another has big tits and a sword, and

they wander around blasting stuff and collecting keys that allow them to progress deeper into the maze until – hurrah – they come to the end. Then they start on a new maze and wander around shooting things. And, once you've mastered the 40 'action-packed' levels you can build your own, or have the Random Dungeon Generator build some for you.

If you ever played (and liked) one of the *Gauntlet* series of arcade games, then you'll probably like this 'tribute'. Certainly, you can easily get into the swing of the action, and the four-player multiplay option is a bit of a laugh. The characters have an extensive line in humorous asides that may well tickle your fancy (or drive you up the wall), but at the end of the day it's a passable *Gauntlet* clone that's easy to dive in and out of in the same way as say *Minesweeper* or, er... *Solitaire* (ahem).

Paul Hales

PCZVERIICT

62%

Shot
dead
before he
even hit the
ground.



101st Airborne
in Normandy

From the barracks
to the battlefield,
you will command
every aspect of the
legendary landings:

80% casualties were
expected.

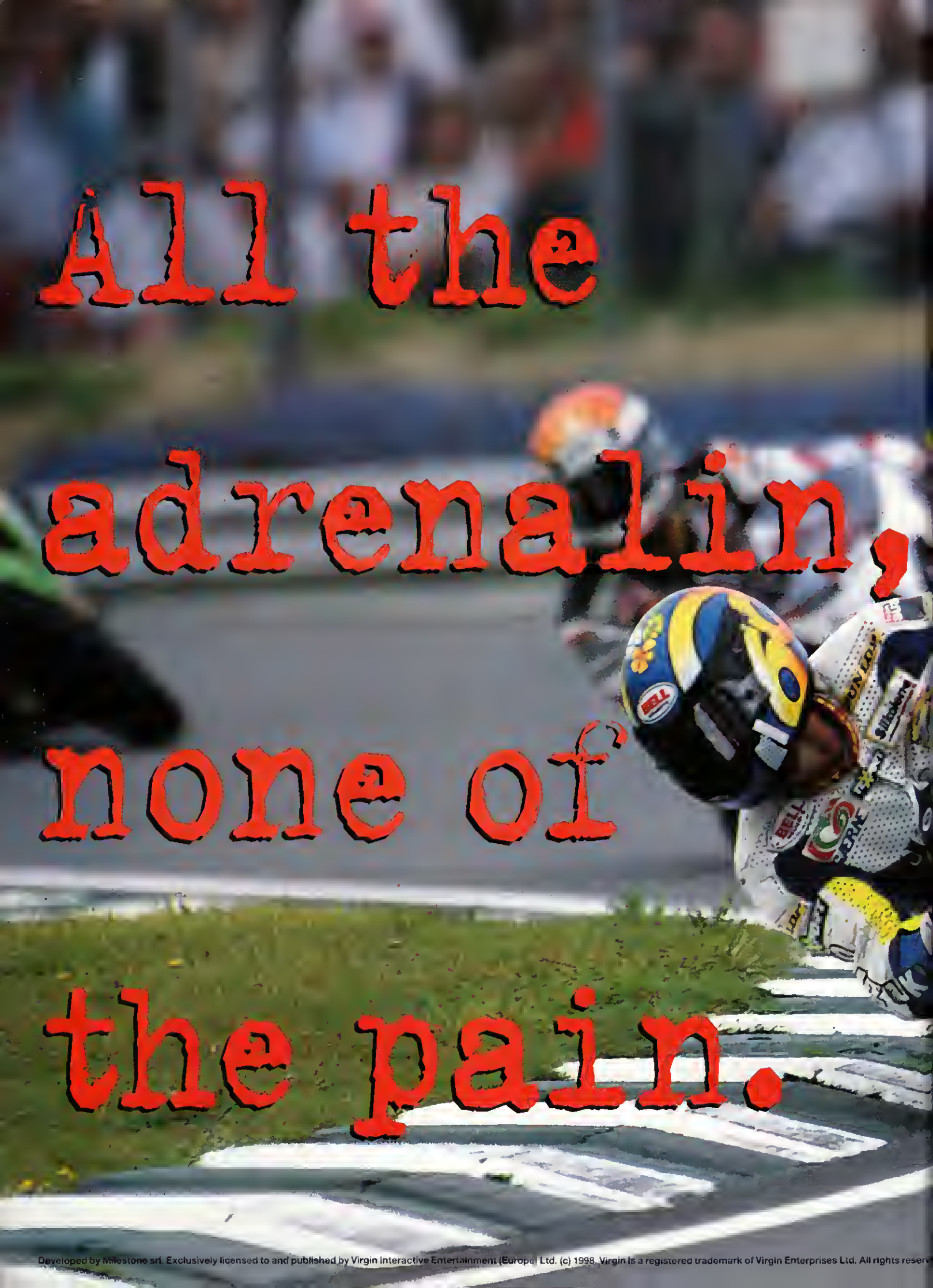
30% were actually lost.

Can you do better?



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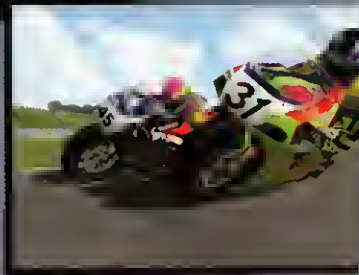


All the
adrenalin,
none of
the pain.

PC CD-ROM



SBC

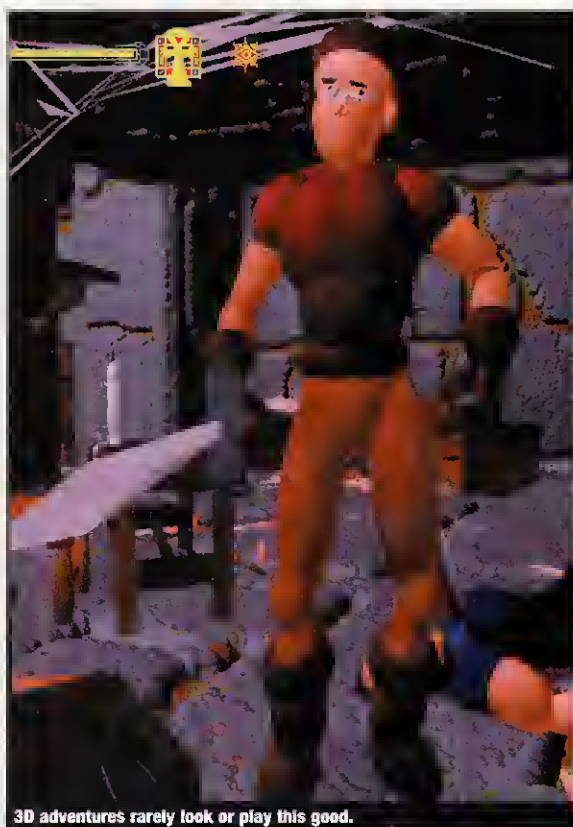


THE GAME

BUDGET ZONE

Everyone wants something for nothing. We can't promise you that but, hey, take a look through the games on offer here, which must surely be the next best thing

★ REVIEWED DILIGENTLY BY Chris Anderson, Richie Shoemaker and Jeremy Wells



3D adventures rarely look or play this good.

ECSTATICA II

★ £9.99 • Argentum • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM

Wouldn't you just know it. You're on your way home after a hard day defeating the forces of evil when, from out of the blue, a winged demon goes and snatches your girlfriend and carries her off into the sky. The audacity of it. Surely they could've thought of something more original than that. Well perhaps, but that's not to say that *Ecstatica II* isn't one of the most enjoyable 3D adventures to come along in a while.

Taking inspiration from the cinematic style of *Alone In The Dark* and, of course, the first *Ecstatica* game, the sequel boasts some pretty impressive graphics, even in this time of 3D hardware acceleration. Animation is fluid and the cartoon style is clear and uncluttered. The adventure itself is big and certainly challenging, especially with a greater emphasis on sword-fighting compared to its older brother.

If there were any criticism of the game it would be that it's perhaps too much of an adventure for some and not enough for others. Once you get into it though, you'll find that at the very least you'll be playing it far longer than many other games in this price bracket.

PCZONE
RECOMMENDED

PCZVERDICT

87%



Settlers 2: still as stupidly addictive as it ever was.

SETTLERS II

★ £9.99 • Blue Byte • Out now

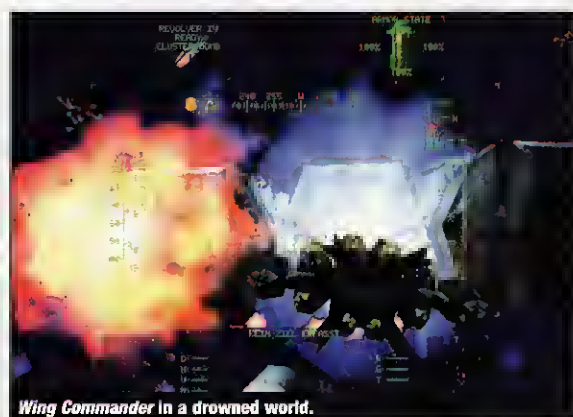
TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486 DX2/66 Memory 4Mb RAM

PCZONE Regular followers of our bargain bin pages will know that we reviewed *Settlers 1* a couple of issues ago (PCZ #67, 65%) and were very clear in our opinion that it was dated by modern standards, and that we'd much rather have *Settlers II* on budget instead. Well what do you know? *Settlers II* has just turned up on budget for our perusal, and verily it is a 'must-buy' for anyone with even a vague interest in real-time strategy games. This is one of the first games to make little computer people fashionable, and while *Settlers 2* is not strictly speaking a C&C clone, it shares many game elements with the genre, with competing players building houses, managing troops (to a limited extent) and mining for resources before wading into their opponents' territory to give them a good seeing-to. *Settlers II* is perhaps a tad more cute graphically than its C&C contemporaries, but generally there's a lot more to do than just build things and kill people. Looking at the game today, it's safe to say it was well ahead of its time when it was first released, and we have no hesitation in recommending it wholeheartedly to you now.

PCZVERDICT

85%



Wing Commander in a drowned world.

ARCHIMEDEAN DYNASTY

★ £9.99 • Blue Byte • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX100 Memory 8Mb RAM

PCZONE Described by Paul Presley as *Wing Commander* underwater when he reviewed it back in issue 42, *Archimedean Dynasty* is, well, exactly that. The only other game that comes close to it in terms of gameplay is *Subwar 2050* (PCZ #63, 75%), a fairly decent underwater submarine combat sim that's looking a bit dated now. *Archimedean Dynasty*, on the other hand, is a gorgeous-looking game with all the graphical sheen and polish we have come to expect from Blue Byte. The missions are challenging, with players having to complete several objectives before achieving their overall goal. There's an intriguing storyline to keep you amused in between the combat missions too, making *AD* a well-rounded gaming experience that's worth ten pounds of anyone's money – even yours.

PCZVERDICT

87%

LORDS OF THE REALM 2

★ £9.99 • Sierra Originals • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX/66 Memory 8Mb RAM

The second game in the *Lords* series proved heavy going for many casual gamers with its complex resource management and tedious battle sections. Hardened strategists, however, found much to enjoy in a game that rewards those willing to get past the initially steep learning curve. You take the role of one of the lords alluded to in the title, and spend your time giving other lords a hard time with the military units you accumulate as you progress. It's not the easiest game in the world to get into, but

if you like the sound of it it's just about worth checking out at this price.



Take the time and you'll find a decent strategy game.

PCZVERDICT

75%



Don't try this in a Mini Metro on the M25 in the wet. Your shopping will go everywhere.

NETWORK Q RAC RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

★ £9.99 • The Q Range • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486 DX2/66 Memory 8Mb RAM

PCZONE RECOMMENDED When we reviewed *Network Q RAC Rally Championship* back in 1996 (PCZ #44) we awarded it a whopping 94 per cent and claimed that it was one of the best driving games ever to grace the PC. Two years on and with the advent of 3D acceleration and the excellent *Colin McRae Rally* (PCZ #68, 93%) from Codemasters, it looks rather dated, just as the original *Screamer* (PCZ #33, 89%) and *Need For Speed* (PCZ #31, 89%) do. That said, the minimum machine specs are a rather lowly 486DX2/66 with just 8Mb of RAM, so if you happen to own a machine Barney Rubble would turn his nose up at or are saving to upgrade your P75, then it represents good value for money.

So what do you get for your tenner? Well, you get to race six 'actual' cars over 28 'realistic' tracks. *Top Gear*'s Tony Mason does the honours in the passenger seat (though thankfully you can turn his nasal directions off), and there are numerous different weather effects and track surfaces to contend with. There are also difficulty options galore, and you can even mess around with your car's set-up. By today's standards it ain't great, but if you're on a budget then it's ten pounds well spent.

PCZVERDICT 80%



Titanic: The Winslett girl is nowhere to be found.



Star Trek Generations: better than the film.

TOTAL INSANITY 2

★ £29.99 • Europress • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM

This is a compilation of three games. Curiously, the box proclaims one of them, *Titanic: Adventure Out Of Time*, as the "best-selling *Titanic* game". It might be a best-seller, but it isn't actually well-known. Anyway, the game takes the form of a *Myst*-style adventure where as a secret service agent, your quest is ultimately to prevent the sinking of the ship and hence divert one of this century's greatest human tragedies – that film (*And that song – Ed*). Thankfully, by relying on some amusingly animated characters rather than inane puzzles, the game is fairly enjoyable and light-hearted. It goes without saying, then, that out of all the *Titanic* games ever released (apart, perhaps, from *Starship Titanic* – which doesn't count), the one in this collection is surely the best.

Star Trek Generations, on the other hand, is quite a different adventure – the plot was ripped straight from the film, rather than the other way around. Although it mixes in the odd bit of space combat, most of the game is made up of *Doom*-style gameplay. The graphics are certainly starting to look their age, but the adventure itself is solid enough. Which is commendable, because *Generations* is arguably the worst *Star Trek* film yet.

What lifts this compilation up, however, is the superb *Worms 2*. Like the ubiquitous *Monopoly*, it's the sort of game that everyone should own, not least because it's practically the most fun a group of people can have huddled around one PC. The gameplay, and the graphics for that matter, don't seem to have dated at all. It's still fast, strategic and immensely entertaining. Although with two adventures to back it up, this compilation feels a little off balance.

PCZVERDICT 78%



Worms 2: two-player mayhem.



The graphics in The 11th Hour were once ground-breaking... but the gameplay's always been crap.

THE 7TH GUEST & THE 11TH HOUR

★ £14.99 • Virgin • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX2/66 Memory 8Mb RAM

Things have moved on some since *The 7th Guest* first appeared. The ill-fated CDI machine has long departed for silicon heaven, and all that remains of its legacy is a dull old puzzle game that keeps haunting PC owners by reappearing now and again on budget. The fact that *The 7th Guest* sold shitloads meant we were treated to a sequel, *The 11th Hour*, and what an equally tedious affair that was too.

Graphically these two horror-puzzle games are still vaguely impressive; gameplay-wise they belong to a bygone age which should stay that way. Game historians might find a place on a dusty shelf for this double pack, but everyone else should stick to something more modern.

PCZVERDICT

48%

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2

★ £4.99 • Kixx Classics • Out now

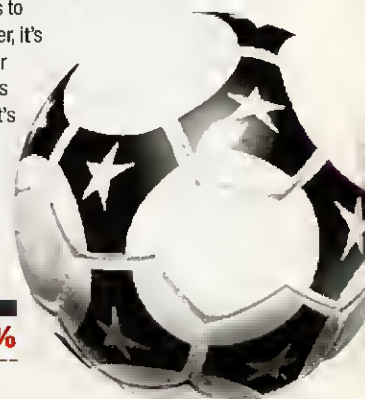
TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486DX2/66 Memory 8Mb RAM

PCZONE CLASSIC Okay, if you haven't heard of *CM2* you're either: a) less than a week old; b) mineral; c) dead. Basically, if you like football management games then you'll love *CM2*.

In a nutshell, it's quite simply the best football management game ever. That is, it was. That accolade now goes to *Championship Manager 97/98*. However, it's essentially the same, except with fewer players and a few less features. There's still an awful lot to do, and as a result it's still devilishly addictive. The fact that the *CM 97/98* is available at a reduced price means that it's probably worth lashing out the few extra pence on the latest version. Mind you, for a fiver it's worth every penny.

PCZVERDICT 90%



THE JOY OF PADS

Looking to buy a gamepad to play your favourite footie sim or platform game with? Look no further

★ IN CONTROL Warren Christmas

With a bewildering number of choices and the almost inevitable compatibility issues, buying and installing a PC peripheral – graphics accelerator, sound card or whatever – is rarely an easy task. But choosing and using a simple gamepad? How hard can that possibly be? Well, actually it's more complex than you might think because – and how many times have you heard this before? – there isn't a single standard for controllers on the PC.

The problem is a legacy of a decade-old system design. The PC's 15-pin joystick port – often referred to as a gameport and usually found on the back of a sound card – was designed to support, with the aid of a splitter cable or box, just two analog devices, each with two independent buttons. So how come some devices, like the Gravis Gamepad, have four buttons? Well, what they're actually doing is offering the buttons normally reserved for joysticks one and two on a single controller. This trick, which has been used for many years (you'll find four-button support in ancient DOS titles like



GRAVIS GAMEPAD PRO

★ £38.29 • Acco • 0800 252359 • www.gravis.com/

No prizes for guessing where the inspiration for this pad came from. Even the layout of its ten independent buttons (which can be assigned with supplied software) is *exactly* the same as a standard PlayStation pad, with four on the right, two in the centre and four on the shoulders.

The GamePad Pro uses a system called GrIP (Gravis Interface Protocol) which was originally developed in the dying days of DOS gaming. This enables GrIP-compatible DOS games (notably titles from the EA Sports series) to utilise all ten buttons even if you have a second GrIP controller plugged in (the lead includes a port, so you don't need a splitter). For games which don't support GrIP, it still functions as a basic four-button pad under DOS.

Whatever, if you're interested purely in Windows gaming, as most of us are these days, this is a capable digital pad which may appeal to PlayStation owners. But with street price of nearly £30 it's somewhat overpriced.

PCZ VERDICT

82%



GRAVIS XTERMINATOR

★ £39.99 • Acco • 0800 252359 • www.gravis.com/

Gravis bill the GrIP-compatible Xterminator as "the most powerful game controller on the planet". By this they mean that they've included every possible feature they could think of. It's got – deep breath – analog and digital directional pads (d-pads), six main buttons plus start, select and shift buttons, an eight-way point-of-view switch and a throttle slider, plus, mounted underneath, two digital triggers and two analog flippers. All these are configurable with Gravis' Keyset Manager software but, rather pleasingly, the main functions are set up the same as Microsoft's SideWinder 'standard' by default.

It's not as comfortable in the hand as the SideWinder, and we found some of the controls (notably the throttle) to be a little out of reach. Also, it's questionable whether anyone actually *needs* all the features here. Nevertheless, if you're after an all-singing, all-dancing digital pad, this is definitely the best alternative to the Microsoft devices.

PCZ VERDICT

86%



LOGIC 3 PC TRIDENT PAD

★ £29.99 • Spectravideo • 0181 900 0024 • www.spectravideo.com/

The Trident is a clone of a Nintendo 64 controller, complete with d-pad and mini-joystick. A good thing in principle, although the configuration of the buttons – *everything* has been copied from the N64, right down to the trigger underneath and the diamond-shaped yellow button arrangement – definitely takes some getting used to.

Liberal use of the word 'digital' is made on the packaging but this is not, strictly speaking, a truly digital device – the extra buttons on the unit simply emulate rudder and throttle controls and the coolie hat of analog systems. It also offers an auto-fire function assignable to individual buttons – at five different speeds. Set-up is made easier (kind of) by way of a detailed LCD menu system.

If you just want a straightforward gamepad for, say, sports games, there are better options around, but as a multi-purpose controller the Trident is well worth a look.

PCZ VERDICT

83%



Wolfenstein 3D is fine to a point, but if you connect two such devices together for a game of footie or whatever, both players are still limited to using two buttons each.

Joy pads which offer even more buttons (often as many as eight) and/or extra features, such as a throttle slider, not only utilise the two buttons normally reserved for a second controller, but also the spare axes. The third and fourth axes are also used by flashy flight sim (and driving) hardware set-ups, which is why you sometimes see buttons on joypads labelled, rather confusingly, as rudder and throttle controls. Whatever, the story remains the same: hook-up two such devices and all the extra functionality is lost.

If this all seems a bit messy, you'd be right. But things are improving – albeit slowly – under Windows thanks to a DirectX component called DirectInput. With some serious software jiggery pokery, this enables support for (in theory) up to 16 specially designed digital controllers with as many as 32 buttons each, all connected via a standard joystick port.

These all-digital devices bring

several other benefits too: they work far more efficiently (saving processor time), are easy to set up with dedicated drivers, and don't need calibrating. Most also come with a software utility which enables you to easily reassign controls or map keyboard commands to buttons for individual games.

This month we've tested a whopping 20 joypads, from cheap, simple, old-school four-button pads, right up to the latest all-digital devices from the likes of Microsoft, Gravis and Thrustmaster, which make full use of

Before buying a pad, we suggest you ask yourself exactly why you want one or, more specifically, which type of games you're going to use it with. Several pads offer an auto-fire (or 'turbo') feature, for example, but are you likely to use it with the games you play? And do you really need a built-in throttle slider when you're more likely to play your flight and racing sims with a joystick? And so what if a pad is supposedly good for playing *Quake*, when a mouse is most gamers' weapon of choice?

“Several pads offer an auto-fire (or 'turbo') feature, for example, but are you likely to use it with the games you play?”

DirectInput. We've picked out eight of the best/most interesting pads here and rounded up the rest over the page. For the record, we used several titles in the test, including *Gex: Enter The Gecko*, *Micro Machines V3* and *Motocross Madness*, but our main test game was office favourite, *World Cup 98*, which makes full use of multi-buttoned, digital pads.

Also, one more thing to keep in mind: we're biased. Biased, that is, towards gamepads which fit comfortably in *our* hands. If you are able to, it makes a lot of sense to try before you buy.

★ *Note: All the prices quoted here are RRP's (recommended retail prices); expect to pay a bit less on the street.*

IT PROBABLY AIN'T BROKE... SO FIX IT

Getting joy from your joypad

If you've got an analog joypad (or indeed a joystick) with extra buttons that don't appear to do anything in games, the device is probably not set up correctly under Windows. To check, select Joystick from the Windows Control Panel.

It's impossible to give specific advice (different pads use different systems), but try setting the device up as a Custom controller and experimenting a little with the set-up. Even if a pad is set up correctly, not all games will recognise the extra buttons, although some, like *Motocross Madness*, give you comprehensive custom options which enable you to do so.

Incidentally, if you have a single analog controller connected and can still only get two buttons to work (or a digital controller which won't work at all), your PC may have a very old gameport which is only half-wired and therefore capable of supporting only one analog device. These are usually found on old Multi I/O interface cards. Most gameports built into sound cards are fully wired and cause no problems.



MICROSOFT SIDEWINDER

★ £29.99 • Microsoft • 0345 002000 • www.microsoft.com/

Specifically designed for Windows (it won't work under DOS), the SideWinder gamepad is a fully digital device with ten independent buttons – six in a main group, a Start button, two well-placed triggers at the rear and one marked 'M' which acts as a 'shift' button, effectively doubling the number of controls at your fingertips.

At the rear is a joystick port into which you can plug another SideWinder without the need of a splitter cable or box (you can daisy-chain four in total). Alternatively, you can plug in another device – say, a flight sim stick – and effortlessly switch between the devices with the SideWinder's tenth button – the mode switch. A nice touch.

The easy-to-use Profile Editor enables you to assign commands to buttons for specific games, but you'll find you won't need to with recent releases, many of which utilise all buttons straight out of the box. And ultimately that's why we like it. It's comfortable in the hand and it works.

PCZ VERDICT

91%



MICROSOFT SIDEWINDER FREESTYLE PRO

★ £49.99 • Microsoft • 0345 002000 • www.microsoft.com/

The brand new Freestyle Pro is very similar to the standard SideWinder pad, albeit with much bulkier handles and an additional throttle wheel. But the real big news here is that it's tilt-sensitive – hit the Sensor button, and instead of using the d-pad you can move around by tilting the device.

Needless to say, using the pad in such a way you'll look like a complete girl or someone who's never played a computer game before, and, let's face it, it's a gimmick which isn't going to be very useful with *that* many games, be it now or in the future.

It is, however, extremely good fun when used with Microsoft's brilliant *Motocross Madness* (PCZ #67, 91%) – “probably the best bike game in the world,” said our review – which just happens to be bundled free with the pad. On its own the game usually costs £34.99, so here the pad is effectively costing you £15. A bargain.

PCZ VERDICT

90%



SAITEK X6-32M

★ £19.99 • Saitek • 01454 855050 • www.saitek.com/

The X6-32M (hey, snappy name, guys) is a lot more straightforward than it looks – most of those switches on the front simply turn the auto-fire feature on and off for each button. There are two speeds of auto-fire, but do you care? No one around here uses such features.

Whatever, at heart this is an old-school four-button pad, with four independent shoulder buttons that emulate the third and fourth axis of a second controller (that is, throttle and rudder controls). Usefully, you can disable these controls so you can hook-up another pad without conflict. Less usefully, there are a couple of LEDs on the front which show when buttons are being pressed.

And that's all there is to it, really. So why the relatively high score? Simply because we found it really nice to use. Shaped similar to a PlayStation controller and, like Logic 3's Trident Pad, covered in a lovely soft-touch coating, it's extremely comfortable in the hand. Yep, we like.

PCZ VERDICT

83% ➔



⬅ SAITEK X6-33M

• £24.99 • Saitek • 01454 855050 • www.saitek.com/

Another strange-looking joystick from Saitek which, like the X6-32M, appears more complex than it really is thanks to the inclusion of individual auto-fire selectors for each of the fire buttons. The X6-33M looks like it's going to be awkward to hold, but it's actually extremely comfortable, with all the controls positioned within easy reach.

Supplied drivers take all the effort out of set-up under Windows, enabling you to choose between using eight individual buttons or six with the throttle slider activated, but it also works under DOS with the extra buttons replicating rudder and throttle controls.

The problem is that the buttons are ordered in a non-standard arrangement with, for example, the micro-switched triggers at the rear of the pad acting as buttons one and two. This is not a big deal with games that enable you to properly configure controls, but it's a pain in the arse with those that don't. Shame.

PCZ VERDICT

80%

THRUSTMASTER RAGE3D

• £29.99 • Thrustmaster • 01276 609955 • www.thrustmaster.co.uk

This weird slab of plastic isn't one of the better joysticks around, but with a thumbwheel in the place of a standard d-pad it is rather unique. In the so-called '2D' mode this works pretty much like any other digital device, but in '3D' mode it recognises subtle movements, like an analog device, for more precise control.

Like the SideWinder, up to four pads can be daisy-chained. It also shares with the SideWinder the number of independent fire buttons (ten in total), with the two shoulder buttons at the rear replicated on the front so you can use the device flat on a desktop.

By default, the buttons are configured differently to Microsoft's pads. True, you can re-configure the buttons with the supplied utility, and if the pad was comfortable to hold and use it might just be worth the effort. Unfortunately, however, it isn't.

PCZ VERDICT

67%

AND THERE'S MORE...

Just when you thought it was time to make a decision, here are some more joypads to consider



Logitech's ThunderPad Digital (76%, £19.99) has a basic four-button configuration like an analog pad, plus four extras – two in the centre and two nicely contoured shoulder buttons. To use any of the

latter, however, you'll need to assign commands for each and every game using the supplied software. It looks a bit tacky and it's a tad small, but it's comfortable in the hand nonetheless.

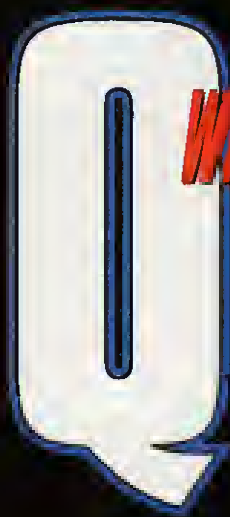


Quickshot's X2 Pad (70%, £17.99) has a standard d-pad and a tiny analog stick, plus a few 'bonus' features such as an auto-fire function and a sliding throttle on top. The problem, however, is that the

d-pad is very, very badly positioned.



The **InterAct PC PowerPad Pro** (63%, £19.99) has similar features to the X2 and has exactly the same problem. Here, we found both the d-pad and the analog stick to be poorly placed. Nice one!



What do you get for doing 200 mph in a built up area?





InterAct's 3D Program Pad (75%, £24.99), which is shaped a little like an oversized PlayStation pad and connects via your keyboard socket as well as a gameport, is better, although at heart it's a

straightforward six-button pad. To use the additional four buttons you need to program them either directly (using the Program Set button) or using the supplied software (which is a bit messy).



The granddaddy of the PC joystick world, the **Gravis PC GamePad** (74%, £17.01) can be used in either four-button or two-button-with-auto-fire modes. Left-handers can use it upside down by flipping the direction of the d-pad, and there's a plug-in mini-joystick... that you'll never use.

We like these pads, but then we've had 'em knocking around the office for years.

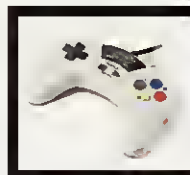


These days, there are more comfortable, better-featured pads available for the money – such as the **Logic 3 PC Action Pad** (82%, £7.99). This bargain-priced, SNES-like controller has a standard

four-button layout and two shoulder buttons which use the third and fourth axes. There's also a two-speed auto-fire feature. Simple, yes, but very good value.



The **PC Swift Pad** (78%, £12.99), from the same Logic 3 range, is similar, but has a clear casing, and an auto-fire feature which can be switched on or off for each individual button.



The **Logic 3 PC MasterPad** (71%, £14.99) goes that bit further with – wait for it – six different speeds of auto-fire. Colly! It also has four shoulder buttons rather than two, although each pair appears to do the same thing. Weird.



The **Per4mer Power Pad** (65%, £14.99) is very similar to the Gravis CamePad, but has two extra auto-fire enabled buttons and two more which, bizarrely, activate buttons A+B or C+D together. All very well, but the main four buttons are arranged in an awkward, non-standard configuration. Not good.



The **Saitek X6-3D** (73%, £12.99) is yet another cheap, straightforward four-button affair, with an auto-fire feature. It's okay given the low price, but the d-pad isn't up to much.



We didn't get on with its sister pad, the **X6-31M** (68%, £14.99), at all. The main buttons (four basic, plus two extra mimicking the third and fourth axes) are very close to the edge of the device,

making it uncomfortable to use, and the repetition of buttons A and B (on the front of the pad rather than on the shoulders) is completely pointless. For what it's worth, it's got a two-speed auto-fire function. Gosh!



Finally, we have the **Blaze PC Hyper Pad** (77%, £12.99), a PlayStation replica with four shoulder buttons operating on the third and fourth axes. Bizarrely, it has three interchangeable thumb

controllers, a not very useable mini-steering wheel thingy around the d-pad, auto-fire on just two buttons, and three buttons that... er, don't appear to do anything at all. Dh, and buttons A and B are positioned below C and D, which is a tad annoying. Pretty good for the dosh nonetheless.

Suppliers:

Blaze (Fire International • 01302 325225)
Gravis (Acco • 0800 252359)
Interact (Interact • 01204 579125)
Logic 3 (Spectravideo • 0181 900 0024)
Logitech (Logitech • 0181 308 6582)
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PCZ SUPERTEST

REAL-TIME STRATEGY GAMES

HOW THE GAMES ARE RATED

First you'll see a brief description of the game in question. There simply isn't the space to give a thorough examination, so you'll also see the issue number of **PC ZONE** where you can read the complete review. Second, we've split the rest of the assessment into five categories:

INTERFACE

Here we look at the way you control the game.

MISSIONS

This describes the single-player aspect of the game.

MULTIPLAY

Looking at the network options and how much fun they are.

UNIQUENESS

Here we attempt to rate the game based on its originality.

STRATEGIC APPEAL

This outlines how much thinking you have to do.

Each category is rated out of 10; the overall score is a percentage. Got that? Good.

Real-time strategy (RTS) offers a subtle blend of action and tactics, but you don't need a Master's degree in order to enjoy it. *Phil Wand* considers what makes RTS so popular, and takes a look at the best top-down RTS games in the genre

While considering the difference between turn-based and real-time strategy games, I was reminded of a colossal session of *Monopoly* I had about three weeks back. There were six of us in all, crammed round the small coffee table in my lounge, squabbling over which cup of tea had sugar in it and the relative 'dunk factor' of Digestives and Rich Tea.

Anyway, my supreme dice-throwing skills had left me last, meaning that not only did I have to sit and listen to five other people remarking that *their* version of the game had blue 20-pound notes and wooden houses, I also had the pleasure of following them round the board and paying them rent. By the end of the first lap, I was 100 quid worse off and had wasted an entire fortnight waiting for other people to make their minds up.

Why am I telling you all this? Because there, in a nutshell, are the main problems of turn-based contests: starting at different times, being forced into a defensive stance before you've even set out, and scratching

your bored arse raw for most of the game. Of course, purists will argue that the whole point of turns is to reflect upon your opponents' actions and respond to them with considered precision.

"In *Monopoly* it's a hotel on Mayfair; in *Dark Reign* it's a plasma blast from a Sky Fortress. Either way, there's nothing more satisfying than bumping off your friends with a status symbol"

DAWN OF A NEW GENRE

Real-time strategy games give you a top-down view of the world, together with live control of the action. So instead of standing in a queue and taking it in turns to 'reflect' and 'consider precisely', you have to think on your feet and resolve situations as they arise. If 1000 tonnes of military hardware rumbles up to the walls of your base, you have to decide what to do with it *now*. And that means issuing orders – click on your troops, direct them into battle, and then watch the ensuing commotion. A flurry of

movement, lots of explosions, and the threat is gone. Phew!

But that's not all. My game of *Monopoly* is also a fine parallel because, just like every game here, it's centred around asset

management. You generate income from a number of different resources – enabling you to buy cooler and cooler stuff – and you then get to watch your opponents squirm as you hit them with the most expensive toy in the game. In *Monopoly* it's a hotel on Mayfair; in *Dark Reign* it's a plasma blast from a Sky Fortress. Either way, there's nothing more satisfying than bumping off your friends with a status symbol.

Here we go, then, with (in reverse order of overall score) a look at seven RTS games...

COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT

★ £44.99 • Virgin • Reviewed PCZ #47

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P75 Memory 8Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Windows 95/98 sound cards, DirectDraw cards **WE SAY** P120 and 16Mb RAM recommended

Although it's been more than two years since the arrival of *C&C: Red Alert*, Westwood's seminal title still has something special about it. The music is good, the effects are just right, the graphics are crystal-clear and the gameplay is perfectly balanced. A lot of its popularity is down to its real-world setting – jeeps, tanks, missile launchers and blokes with machine-guns inhabit a very recognisable landscape of oceans, trees, rivers, bridges and dirt tracks (*Age Of Empires* is similar in 'earthly appeal' but is set in the dim and distant past). You also get rather attached to the people you command – they get squashed, burned, torn to shreds,

zapped, and they always shriek when it hurts.

INTERFACE

The *Red Alert* interface works well, but it's now a long way behind every other game here bar *WarCraft II*. The most obvious criticism is that you can't build two things at once – even with four missile silos, you're still limited to just the one nuke. This keeps the pace of the game very slow, and often leaves you with no other option than to stockpile your weapons and attack en masse.

MISSIONS

Red Alert has two sides to pick from: Allied or Soviet. Whichever

you choose, the missions are varied and enjoyable; they also help demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of units in different situations. This game was also one of the first to use cinematic cut-scenes not just to boggle you with graphics, but also to build the plot.

MULTIPLAY

Network sessions are great fun, although players do tend to be unimaginative in their base-building; this is due mainly to the game's requirement that you build new structures next to old ones. However, unlike *TA*, it's possible to exploit the weaknesses of your enemy and win by being

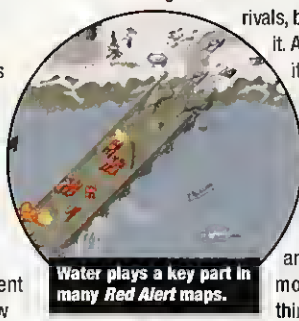


An air force backed up with a tank battalion can be pretty devastating.

underhand and surreptitious, not just by being the richest player and having the biggest arsenal.

UNIQUENESS

Red Alert is unique in being the game that launched a thousand rivals, but that's about it. A few years ago it was a country mile ahead of the rest and everyone was playing it; nowadays it's behind the times and people have moved on to better things.



Water plays a key part in many *Red Alert* maps.

STRATEGIC APPEAL

Limited by its 'one at a time' approach to building units, *Red*

Alert suffers from the age-old problem of stockpiling. That said, the variety of units and their ability to exploit weaknesses in opponent forces means you're able to plan, assemble and carry out a highly efficient attack using only a small number of troops.

PCZ VERDICT

Interface	7
Missions	7
Multiplay	8
Uniqueness	6
Strategic appeal	8

77 Still a good game, though no longer an example to others

STARCRRAFT

★ £39.99 • Cendant • Reviewed PCZ #64

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** DirectX-compatible sound and video card **WE SAY** P133 with 32Mb RAM recommended

While *StarCraft* isn't the freshest dish on the menu – it's essentially a science fiction reworking of *WarCraft II* – it remains highly playable, instantly accessible and

great to look at. Blizzard have gone one further than most by providing three different races to choose from. Whichever culture you go for (and assuming you

overlook issues of originality) you should find that the game provides a heady blend of all that's good about real-time strategy: good plot, a wide variety of units, nail-biting battles, lots of visual appeal and ease of use.

INTERFACE

A superb context-sensitive help system has been built into the game, meaning you very rarely get stuck trying to do something. Along the way, the units you command will chip in with comments and even tips, making you feel even more at home with the way the game plays.

MISSIONS

Like *WarCraft*, *StarCraft*'s single-player game is not its major selling point. However, it does provide a suitable challenge through a constantly evolving

storyline, and by enabling you to play as any one of the three different races. What's more, Blizzard provide you with a Campaign Editor, so if you don't like what you've got you can make your own.

MULTIPLAY

What is indisputable is the fact that *StarCraft* has a huge multiplayer following, both globally and on private networks. American sales of the game are testimony to that fact – over a million units have already been shipped. The reasons are simple: there's a large variety of units, a large variety of tactics, and a near infinite number of maps thanks to the supplied Campaign Editor. Perhaps most importantly of all, it runs like a souped-up version of *WarCraft II*.

UNIQUENESS

StarCraft is not unique. It neither progresses the genre nor introduces any really major advancements in terms of play. As an example, the game's artificial intelligence is still on a par with garden tools – something that

Blizzard really should have sorted out by now.

STRATEGIC APPEAL

The game's many maps offer a series of diverse environments to tackle, and range from abandoned towns to massive floating space jetties. Each setting has a unique feature that you are able to exploit to your advantage – for example, positioning sniper troops on rooftops to have a swipe at the enemy without them being able to get even close. There are also other neat new buildings, such as bunkers, which you place at strategic points round your base.

PCZ VERDICT

Interface	8
Missions	7
Multiplay	9
Uniqueness	6
Strategic appeal	8

85 A great game, if not particularly original



In space, no one can hear you go "Aww!" at the pretty explosions.

A NIGHT OUT WITH THE LADS



WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN...

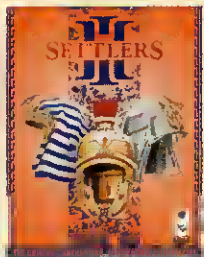


III THE SETTLERS III



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DARK REIGN

★ £39.99 • Activision • Reviewed PCZ #56

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Windows 95/98 sound cards, SVGA cards **WE SAY** Runs best on a P166

Looking like a cross between *Command & Conquer* and, er, *Command & Conquer*, Activision's *Dark Reign* is a supremely enjoyable outing. The variable 3D terrain employs elevation and line of sight, both of which you can use to your advantage when planning an attack or building your defence, and you can also assign any number of waypoints to your units as they move across the map.

INTERFACE

The *Dark Reign* control system is superb, and is in essence the *Command & Conquer* interface on steroids. Structures in the game are built by construction rigs; if you want to build several things at the same time, just have several rigs handy. Simple. Like

Age Of Empires, you can choose to upgrade existing structures and open up more production options. Uniquely, *Dark Reign* gives you an overview of all the

“The control system is superb, and is in essence the *Command & Conquer* interface on steroids”

units that are currently under construction – a very handy feature indeed.

MISSIONS

The game centres around two factions – the Freedom Guard and the Imperium – and each mission

enables you to play as either. The mixed bag of missions are enjoyable and virtually identical for both sides – all that changes is your allegiance.

MULTIPLAY

The network play feature furnishes you with multiplayer options such as alliances, teams and start locations – options which you can also find in *StarCraft* and *Total Annihilation*, but which are notably absent from the other games. You can also define special rules for network games, such as ‘Not permitted to attack freighter units’.

UNIQUENESS

Although *Dark Reign* is the archetypal real-time title, it does offer a few features that none of the other games have. For example, you're given full control over each unit's artificial intelligence routines – this enables you to determine how



Battles can be big and sprawling and are a lot of fun.

much damage your troops take before they retreat, if they pursue enemy units they encounter, and so on. There are also some useful ‘one-click’ routines, such as a predefined reconnaissance loop that orders your units to scout out the unexplored areas of the map.

STRATEGIC APPEAL

Together with unique multiplayer features, one-click behaviour selection and customisable AI routines, *Dark Reign* enables you to send your units off by themselves and concentrate more on your grand plan. Because of this, strategy fans will have a

whale of a time, and will find that the game keeps them occupied for many a happy hour.

PCZ VERDICT

Interface	8
Missions	8
Multiplay	8
Uniqueness	8
Strategic appeal	9

86 A fine game that just lacks the character of its main rivals

AGE OF EMPIRES

★ £34.99 • Microsoft • Reviewed PCZ #54

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** DirectX compatible sound and video card **WE SAY** Get yourself a Pentium II and 32Mb RAM

Age Of Empires is often described as the game *Civilization II* should have been, with attractive graphics, come-back gameplay and incredible attention to detail. Much of your time is spent in familiar territory – build a base, harvest resources, send out scouts to expand your grasp of

the map, and then march off towards the red blips on your radar. However, the game goes beyond the ordinary by introducing four Ages – Stone, Bronze, Tool and Iron – through which your people mature and evolve, together with 12 of history's mightiest civilisations.

INTERFACE

The game's interface feels very slick and fresh, and includes a full-featured help system. You can also assign multiple orders, and get your villagers to assist each other when building things. Like *Red Alert* the game is instantly accessible.

MISSIONS

Along with *TA* and *Dark Reign*, *Age Of Empires* is unusual in having a hugely convincing single-player mode. It enables you to tackle a random map, a deathmatch (where you start with a full compliment of resources) or a full campaign, which is a series of scenarios that chronicle the rise of individual civilisations. And unlike *TA*, the difficulty setting really does seem to have an effect on the strength of the computer opposition.

MULTIPLAY

Multiplayer is as good as single-player, with up to eight players



able to sock it out over a network, Internet connection, modem or serial cable. An interesting and unique twist is the option to have two players controlling the same civilisation, and thus enter the realm of conflicting orders (and massive arguments).

UNIQUENESS

During the first ten minutes, *Age Of Empires* feels like every other game in the genre. You're building things, collecting things, making things. Chances are you'll want to surgically remove it from your hard drive and march back to the shop for a refund. But don't. Stick with it. The game soon opens up, presenting you with scores of different units and options as your people mature and move through the four Ages.

STRATEGIC APPEAL

Computer opponents tend to be on the strong side, meaning you have to rely on clever placement of guards, outposts and warships. You'll need every trick in the book to outsmart a Bronze Age enemy if you're stuck in the Stone Age.

PCZ VERDICT

Interface	8
Missions	8
Multiplay	9
Uniqueness	8
Strategic appeal	9

90 A visually stunning strategy classic, but not for everyone



Laying siege with catapults. Exquisite animation makes the scene come alive.

TOTAL ANNIHILATION

★ £39.99 • GT Interactive • Reviewed PCZ #56

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P100 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** DirectX compatible sound and video card **WE SAY** P200 with 32Mb RAM recommended

It's been well over a year since Cavedog unleashed *Total Annihilation* on an unsuspecting real-time strategy world, and rival publishers must now be fed up with their latest offerings being compared to what is effectively old software. The thing is, the reason *TA* is still a yardstick is the same reason *Quake* is still a yardstick – it craps on everything else from a great height.

But before we continue our assessment, Cavedog deserve a special mention for the support they've given *TA* players via their website – new units, maps, editors, upgrades and utilities dished out free to anyone who wants them. Compare this commitment to Westwood and to Blizzard, and you'll see why you-know-who scoops all the press and reader awards.

INTERFACE

The key to the *TA* experience is its logical interface and the ability to

stack orders. Click to store one command, then hold down shift and click to store any number of others – your units will then complete them in sequence. This may sound humdrum – after all, it sounds a pretty bloody obvious way of doing things – but Cavedog's interpretation of it is both unique and a total joy to use.

MISSIONS

At the start of each scenario, you take control of a Commander – a big-bastard robot who's able to create structures anywhere on the map using a process of mixing metal with energy. The trouble here is that a lot of the game's ballyhooed technologies (eg line of sight) tend to go right out the window in favour of maximum firepower.

MULTIPLAY

Multiplayer *TA* is a frantic succession of laser bolts, missiles and massive explosions that rattle

SUPERTEST WINNER

the whole screen. Brilliantly, the game features 'proper' teams, meaning you're able to share your resources automatically, hand over redundant units, and even build things together. Once you've won a co-op game against a team of vicious-bastard computer players, everything else in the genre pales by comparison.

UNIQUENESS

TA has all the elements of every other title here, and if you were to describe it in a sentence you'd wonder what the hullabaloo was all about. But wait. It arrived at a time when the genre was overcrowded and stagnant, and was the first to introduce polygon units on true 3D terrain. It also offered authentic intelligence derived from real-life military tactics, line of sight, and delicately balanced action. Today, all these elements still gel

perfectly to form the most exciting and most rewarding experience yet.

STRATEGIC APPEAL

When compared to the likes of *MechCommander* and *Age Of Empires*, strategy is not *TA*'s strong point. Many units are too similar, meaning the commonest attack is with the largest number of most heavily armed troops. Also, where *Dark Reign* and *Red Alert* have you thinking hard about where you're going to get your next dime from, *TA* positively swamps you with resources. Nevertheless, it is still possible to plot your attacks, with ground, sea and air forces all playing a part, so the planners and schemers among you will not be too disappointed. [2]



A peaceful seaside town, complete with invasion fleet and anti-aircraft towers.

PCZ VERDICT

Interface	9
Missions	8
Multiplay	9
Uniqueness	9
Strategic appeal	8

92 Without any doubt the genre's tour de force

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RTS

Most people will tell you that, back in 1992, Westwood's *Dune II* (PCZ #01, 89%) was the first real-time strategy game. But while it marked the start of a new era in PC gaming, there have been other, much older titles that 'did the business' just as well. A few examples are D M Lock's exceptional *Satellite Warrior* (1985) on the Amstrad CPC 464, *Herzog Zwei* (1989) on the Sega Genesis, and Silicon Knights' *Steel Empire* (1992) for the PC/ST/Amiga, which had an addictive mix of both real-time combat and turn-based strategy.

After Westwood's award-winning *Dune II*, Blizzard released *WarCraft* (PCZ #22, 70%), which was fundamentally the same basic game but with two resources to manage and comprehensive network play options. Westwood hit back in 1995 with the now legendary *Command & Conquer* (PCZ #28, 95%) and, although it didn't progress the real-time concept, it had widespread appeal and was based more on reality than fantasy. Blizzard came to the fore again with *WarCraft II* (PCZ #36, 82%), and then Westwood followed up soon after with their landmark game *Command & Conquer: Red Alert* (PCZ #47,

94%). From then on, publishers went ballistic, and the genre has become more crowded than a Friday night commuter train. The best RTS efforts are reviewed here.



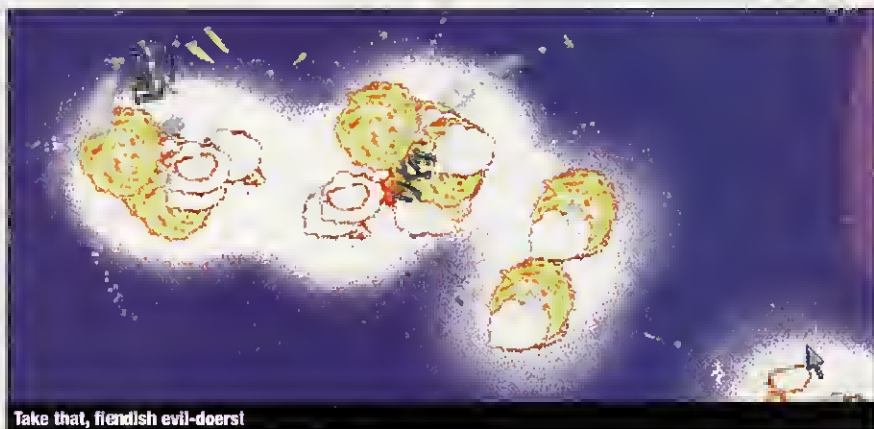
Dune II: starting the RTS ball rolling.



The ARM base has an entirely different suite of units to choose from.



It's like Heathrow on a bank holiday weekend. Except, of course, there's no grass left.



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FEEDBACK

Is a game awesome, or awful? Magnificent, or mind-numbing? We've had our say on them, and here's where you, the people who count to voice your views. *Richie Shoemaker* dives into the postbag

IT'S YOUR SHOUT!

Feedback is here to offer you, the player, a platform to voice your opinions on any of the games reviewed in *PC ZONE* over the last three months. Whether you want to sing a game's praises or simply give it a verbal beating, we want to hear from you. Remember to keep your comments between 5D and 15D words and include your name and address.

WRITE TO Feedback, *PC ZONE*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL Alternatively, email them to us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with 'Feedback' in the subject line.

“Paul Rose must be either as thick as my A-level textbook or he was blind drunk while writing the review”

STUART WALKER DEFENDS *TRIBAL RAGE*

FINAL FANTASY VII

REVIEWED Issue 66, August
SCORE 93%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC “An intensely playable hybrid of simple arcade-style action and traditional RPG geekery. In its own way, *Final Fantasy VII* is just as nerdy as the most bearded *Dungeons & Dragons* clone you could imagine.”

What you think

★ “*Final Fantasy VII* is great, but it crashes too often. Surely Eidos could have done a better port? The gameplay would perhaps have suffered with mouse control, but the option should still have been there (especially for combat). As it is, it's too similar to the PlayStation version. Apart from the graphics and sound options, it doesn't take advantage of the PC's capabilities. Not being able to load a saved game mid-game is ridiculous. Having said that, I still love it.”

Phil Craig

★ “Bugs in games really annoy me. I'm not even off the first disk of *Final Fantasy VII* and I've found one bug that stops you from getting any further, and another that stops you from completing a sub-quest. They both seem to be of the same nature – missing active spots on the screen.

Didn't they play the game all the way through before releasing the PC version? This wouldn't annoy me so much if it wasn't a really good game. Mind you, they could have re-rendered the backdrops in 640x480 instead of stretching the 320x200 PlayStation screens. And the sound could be a lot better. But I still like the game for its depth and storyline.”

Chris Scott, Australia

★ “*FFVII* is one of the worst games I've ever played. First of all I couldn't get it to work properly as it did not recognise the D3D drivers on my machine, even after I loaded the ones that they supplied on the installation disk. After telling it I had no 3D card and got it running, I discovered

the true meaning of crapness: the music was irritating, the storyline was a joke, the dialogue between the characters was laughable. The control system was awkward and user-unfriendly, and people appeared from nowhere to challenge you to a fight. It is a waste of four perfectly good CDs.”

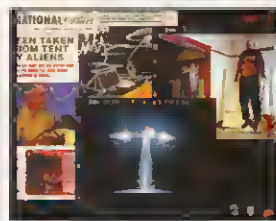
Ely Thunderbolt

THE X-FILES

REVIEWED Issue 68, October
SCORE 40%

What we thought

“The most rudimentary, basic, mind-numbingly ponderous adventure we've seen in a long time. It's like the last 2D years never happened and we're back to Zork-level complexity.”



★ The *X-Files*: far too easy, says James ‘Done It In Two Days’ A-R.

What you think

★ “I just wanted to send this letter to warn people about *The X-Files* game. It's nothing about graphics, hardware or gameplay. When I got the game I finished it in two days – seven CDs in the box and it only took two days! Also, it's far too easy. It's rated 15, so you'd think it would be a bit harder. I'm only 13 (obviously I had to get my parents to get it) and it was just far too easy. So this is just a warning to anyone planning on buying it: wait until it comes down in price.”

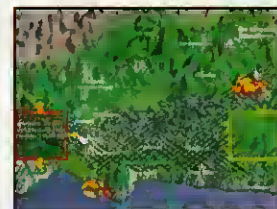
James A-R

TRIBAL RAGE

REVIEWED Issue 67, September
SCORE 54%

What we thought

“Please, if you're going to copy someone else's gameplay, at least do it well. This is like a forgery of a £10 note with a cat's arse in place of the Queen's face.”



★ *Tribal Rage*: superb – ranks alongside *C&C*, says Stuart Walker.

What you think

★ “Why oh why did you give *Tribal Rage* only 54%? The graphics aren't uninspired or sloppy, and the menu only takes up 4cm on my 15-inch monitor. In my opinion it deserves more praise than you gave it. The gameplay is superb and ranks alongside *C&C* and *TA*. Paul Rose must be either as thick as my A-level textbook or he was blind drunk while writing the review. My little brother has got more sense than he has! And while we're on the subject of reviews, *The Ultima Collection* is the biggest hunk of garbage I've ever played, and most of my friends agree. Ninety per cent? You must all be mad!”

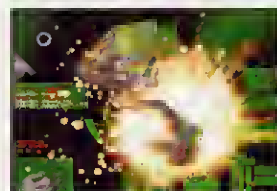
Stuart Walker, Chester

FREESPACE - THE GREAT WAR

REVIEWED Issue 66, August
SCORE 89%

What we thought

PCZONE RECOMMENDED “Both novices and hardened space sim fans will get an awful lot out of this. Until the next big thing comes along, you could do a hell of a lot worse than buy *Freespace*.”



★ *Freespace - The Great War*: brilliant, enthuses Matthew Day.

What you think

★ “Wow, *Freespace* has got to be one of the best – maybe even the best – space combat game ever.



Final Fantasy VII: one of the worst games Ely Thunderbolt has ever played; Phil Craig loves it.



Carmageddon II demo. crap graphics, awful sounds, and no idea of a goal, says a miffed Michael Kennedy.

I found it just brilliant, to say the least. I got the demo off the Net and immediately fell in love with the game's gorgeous graphics and gameplay. I went straight out and bought the full version and completed it in three days. I have never liked space combat games before this. I just hope there's a sequel, or that some other games company can make a game as good as this one."

Matthew Day, Bristol

DEATHTRAP DUNGEON

REVIEWED Issue 65, July

SCORE 70%

What we thought

"The graphics aren't bad, the controls are easy to get the hang of, and it'll run acceptably on a relatively low-spec P133. Its only crime is that it simply doesn't excel at any of the things it sets out to do."



Deathtrap Dungeon: quite trippy, reckons 'Far Out & Gone'.

What you think

"Mmm, I see your point, but in the spirit of the old *Fighting Fantasy* books I thought *Deathtrap* was a hell of a lot of fun. It was quite trippy in places, what with goblins driving about in giant shoes. And those clowns really were quite scary. Perhaps they should've ditched the *Tomb Raider* angle in favour of a bit more adventure. Anyway, c'ya."

Far Out & Gone

"Ye gods, did they playtest this game? I paid £35 for it and found it to be very, very crap compared to, say, *Jedi Knight*, *Quake* and *Tomb Raider* etc. I'm very disappointed and I'll be part-exchanging the blighter for something a hell of a lot more playable soon."

Bun

CARMAGEDDON II DEMO

Okay, you've probably already read the review on page 86, but those of you who bought last month's Issue have already come to your own conclusions about one of this year's most anticipated releases.

"It's a vast improvement on the first game. I like the new pedestrians and the way they act. I was about to run over a fat guy but he jumped off the road and plummeted into the water, where I saw him swimming for his life. Ace! I also like the power-ups — they're tinnier than the ones in the original. It's too hard to kill people with the door though, I just like to use the repulsificator and stuff like that. Try this: slowly hit a ped till he gets on your roof, then use all your Kangaroo power-ups at once. Very cool."

Eddie Amphlett

"At first glance it just looks like a slightly souped-up version of the first *Carmageddon*, but after you play it for a few minutes you realise it's got incredible depth and there's so much more you can do."

"The peds are so versatile. I like the groovin' peds, but my favourites are the helium-filled peds — knocking one down and

watching them fly through space really made me laugh out loud. As for the cars, it's the repulsifier that I really enjoy. I managed to throw the truck up vertically when I had it against a wall, and managed to get it about 60 feet up in the air."

"So, a great improvement to the graphics engine but, more importantly, a lot of thought gone into the game and the content itself. Unlike *Carmageddon*, this gets better and better the more you play it. I've played this demo for almost as long as I played *Carma 1* (okay, slight exaggeration) and I'm still discovering new things to do. I just can't wait to get my hands on the full version."

D. Stewart

"I'm not sure what to make of it, really. I played it for quite a while and have gone back to it a few times, but it's not as good as I expected it to be. For a start, even with the new graphics engine *Carmageddon II* looks too similar to the other one, and there are other games which look much better. It's certainly gorier than the first one. One example is shooting down the road at 160 mph, driving past a dog and opening the doors and knocking the poor dog's head off."

The new power-ups are pretty good, and the cars look better, but there aren't a whole lot of new features. And the 'pre-release' demo ran pretty slow on my P233.

Hopefully the final game will be a bit better. But *Carmageddon* got boring after a few weeks because it got too samey, and I can see *Carmageddon II* going the same way"

Gary Ambrose, Essex

"I played the *Carmageddon II* demo and I was less than impressed with it. It wasn't the content of the game that shocked me, it was the actual game itself. I mean, come on, what the hell are SCI doing to the public and higher governing bodies. It's these sorts of games that are gaining so much unprecedented bad press. SCI should take a real good look at this trash."

"Let's see now... Graphics: naff. And I mean naff! Speed: what speed? *Driving Miss Daisy* would be a better-suited title. Sounds: it sounded like they sampled some poor sod trying to hold back filling his pants after eating a bad curry. I'm not impressed. Gameplay: I have to admit, I found great pleasure in decapitating zombies. But isn't there some sort of race to win? What of the other contestants? I tended to see them once and that was it. I was left to rip zombies to shreds with a conked-out vehicle because I couldn't control it enough to miss the lampposts. At least I had a laugh

when I finally got bored and headed full-pelt into the wall, only to see my car burst into flames."

"Shame on you all, SCI. If you're going to do a game that is almost certain to gain much hated abuse from governments and concerned parents, then let's make it a good game; one which is almost worth the bad press it's almost certain to attract."

Gameplay is there, but it all looks so awful when compared to other 3Dfx and D3D delights of today. Visuals shouldn't really matter, but for a game that is so heavily based on ultra-violence it would be nice to actually see what you are destroying. Instead I got a whole load of crap graphics with awful sounds and no real idea as to what my *real* goal is, unless you count zombie-killing for points."

Michael Kennedy

(Fancy a career in motion-capture modelling, Michael? If so I'll forward your address to the *Stainless boys*. They've been looking for a suitable 'replacement' for ages — Ed) [CZ]

IT'S JUST NOT CRICKET



Patrick McCarthy, red-faced and steaming, puts the record straight regarding Empire's *International Cricket Captain*

REVIEWED Issue 65, July

SCORE 68%

Two issues ago, *Empire* accused me of not playing *ICC* enough. This is complete bollocks and makes me angry. I've reviewed enough games to know that you can warm to something, or that something can start off seeming good and then gradually begin to get on your tits (which happened to me with *International Cricket Captain*).

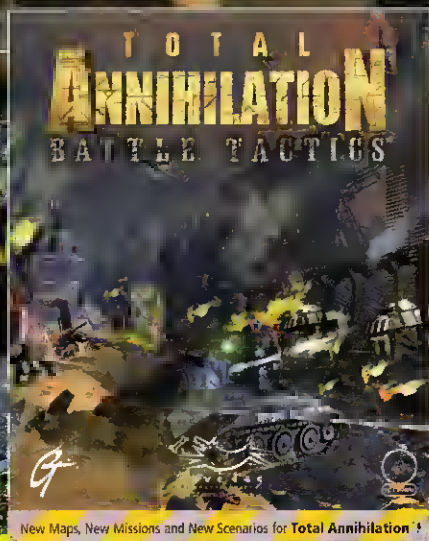
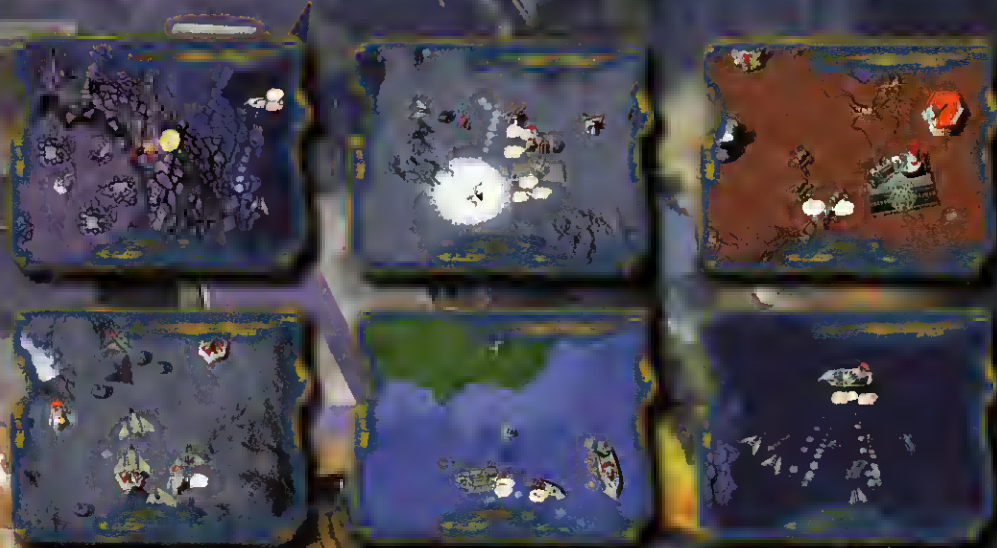
For the record, I played a number of individual matches several different ways, specifically to test the "it plays to the stats" line *Empire* pushed at us. I always do this in management games of this sort — quit without saving, and play the same match again.

The crux of the whole problem is that *Empire* have tried to force a format — football management — on to a sport which it doesn't especially suit, without adding anything extra. The manager/captain thing is a case in point: you're doing stuff which neither job title accurately describes, and the whole thing fails to convince.

As a management game, there's not enough to do because of the way cricket signings are carried out; and as a 'captain' game there's not enough to do because you have insufficient control over when things go right and wrong. Management games need to give you lots of manager-type things to do. A cricket manager doesn't actually do very much; and a cricket captain would be playing. If it's called *International Cricket Captain*, why can't you play?

As far as I can see, I tried to say most of this (if rather more succinctly) in the review. I tried to say it's not *that* bad a game, just that it's a bad choice of sport for a management game, and that an arcade element would help. I like cricket a lot and I really like cricket games. I still play an old SNES cricket game on a regular basis, and it's five years old. I hoped *ICC* would be good, but it isn't. We don't write reviews for publishers, we write them for the people who spend money on the games. If *Empire* don't like it, they can get lost.

DIVE RIGHT INTO A NEW BATCH OF MISSIONS FOR THE WORLD'S MOST EXPLOSIVE STRATEGY GAME!



New Maps, New Missions and New Scenarios for **Total Annihilation**!

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New Maps, New Missions

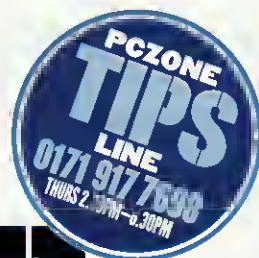
TOTAL ANNIHILATIONTM BATTLE TACTICSTM



and New Scenarios for **Total AnnihilationTM**

Stuck on a game?
Hardware too soft or
software too hard? Footie
team started the season
with a four-nil drubbing?
Girlfriend still hasn't
forgiven you for mooning
at her mum? Don't worry,
here comes the **PC ZONE**
team to the rescue, magic
sponge cold and dripping

CHEAT MASTER



Here we are again with the gaming equivalent of a suitcase full of steroids. Pump this lot into your PC and you'll never lose again

★ CHEATMEISTER Keith Pullin



X-COM Interceptor:
be God and grab
\$10 million.

IN TRUBS THIS MONTH...

138 CHEATMASTER

If at first you don't succeed, cheat. Allow us to show you how it's done.

139 DEAR KEITH

Need a hand? Keith Pullin, our man with the plan, is here (just over there on the right, in fact) to help.

140 MECHCOMMANDER

Andrew Wright tells you everything you need to know to Kick Clan butt.

146 COMMANDOS

Last month Steve Hill took you through the first ten missions, here he guides you through the rest.

151 DEAR WAZZA

Got a technical query, deary? Our tech-head Wazza is here to help.

152 HOW TO... MAKE A WEBSITE

In which (strange but absolutely true) Phil Wand explains how to make a website.

158 WATCHOOG

Has someone pissed you off? Not satisfied with the service you've received? Allow **PC ZONE** to take up your case.

YOUR HOSTS



Warren
Christmas



Keith
Pullin



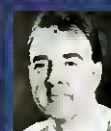
Steve
Hill



Adam
Phillips



Phil
Wand



Andrew
Wright

ON THE CD



ON THE CD

We've got solutions to over 1200 games squeezed onto this month's CD. Check out the Editorial section of your CD-ROM browser to track them all down.

NEED HELP?

If your problem's game-related, get organised and...

WRITE TO Dear Keith/Cheatmaster,
PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19
Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk
with 'Dear Keith' or 'CheatMaster' in
the subject line.

X-COM INTERCEPTOR

MicroProse

During the game, press 'Ctrl' and 'e' simultaneously to activate the cheat mode. You'll hear a double chime. You won't see a text box, but you can now type the following codes:

Cantouchthis	God in combat
Knowitall	All research
Fillerup	Unlimited flight range
Payday	Gain \$10m

CIVIL WAR: BLUE & THE GREY

Empire Interactive

Civil war still seems to be popular, so what the hell, have a couple of tips.

★ Build units by combining new units with experienced units. New units take on the veteran's experience providing the added unit has fewer soldiers. Basically, just split up your new troops and draft them in bit by bit.

★ Always attack with a large army on one side of the enemy and a small cavalry unit on the other. Make sure your enemy's forces have no adjoining units, and each victory will result in the total loss of the enemy unit.

CYBERSTORM 2

Sierra

Don't be put off by the fact that you've got to edit a file for this one - it's not that difficult and it's definitely worth the effort.

Load up the 'STORM.INI' file in an editor (Notepad is fine) and add the codes below (or just the ones you want). This adds a new menu option during the game.

★ HERC BASE CHEAT CODES:

I'll Buy That For A Credit Receive one credit

Will work for credits 1000 credits

Mo money 10,000 credits

Too much wheat 100,000 credits

You may have already won 1,000,000 credits

CUC Mega credits

As Good as It Gets Max-O-Repair

You da man Max-O-Commander (Tech + Credits + Facilities)

Home is where the heart is

Max-O-Facilities

Must have! Max-O-Chassis

He Who Dies With The Most Toys

Gain all technologies

It was nice while it lasted

Revert to normal technologies

★ BATTLE CHEAT CODES:

Tarsus Heal selected pilots

It's just a flesh wound

Repair selected vehicle

That must hurt Touch of Death (many)

Feel my wrath Restock selected vehicles

Go Go Power Ranger Reset selected units

Fly Away Get Mega turn-based move points

Vengeance is mine Get Mega turn-based action points

Did I break your concentration Touch of Death (one)

There can be only one Invincibility

Death to all who oppose us Destroy all enemies

Freaky Friday Become another player

Let there be light v2 Fog of War; God-like

Let there be light Fog of War changes

JACK NICKLAUS 5

Accolade

Try this for a secret opponent: create a female computer golfer who is pro, plays from the black tee and has the name Barbara Nicklaus. Something strange will happen. If that's not enough you can always try typing these words of wisdom during a game:

Superball High bounce
Molehill Big hills
Waxanerd Play 'Wack-A-Nerd'

MORTAL KOMBAT 4

GT Interactive

Full-on cheat heaven, and oodles of blood. (NB These cheats require a gamepad.)

★ GHEAT MENU

Enter Kombat Kode '3122D3' on the VS screen. Quit the match and go into the Practice Menu. Hold 'low kick' + 'block' over the 'Difficulty' option for 15 seconds to start the cheat mode.

★ FIGHT AS MEAT

Enter 'Group Mode' and complete the game with all 16 characters, then select any character and begin a match. You'll be playing as Meat, but with all the moves of your previously selected character.

★ FIGHT AS GORO

Glock the game with Shinnok and re-enter the character selection screen. Choose the 'HIDDEN' icon using the 'run' button, and keep holding it, then press 'up', 'up', 'up' and 'left' to highlight Shinnok's icon, and then press 'block' while still holding 'run'. You should begin as Goro. Dh yes.

★ FIGHT AS NOBB SAIBOT

Complete the game with Reiko. Enter the 'D12D12' Kombat code in Versus mode. Exit this match and go to the character selection menu. Choose the 'HIDDEN' icon using 'run', keep holding it, then press 'up', 'up' and 'left' to highlight Reiko's icon. Now press 'block' while

still holding 'run'.

★ SINGLE-PLAYER STAGE SELECT

Enter the Practice menu and select the stage before the one you really want. Begin the fight, then immediately quit. Start a normal single-player game, and presto – the level you want.

★ ALTERNATE DRESS

Press 'start' and any action button to rotate the select screen pictures twice to activate the character's 'away kit' (except for Sonya and Tanya, where they must be rotated three times).

DIE BY THE SWORD

Interplay

We started you off with a few tasty cheats for this game back in PC ZONE #64, but now here's the full, definitive list. Simply hold F1 while playing the game, and type this lot, and cheat away to your heart's content:

Agrav Any hacked off body parts will float in mid-air
Alarm Shows where the enemy thinks you are
Bamff Teleport
Btiny Small characters
Bzone Cycle through screen modes

Dedly Awesome weapons
Fpers Display frame rate
Freez Turn off AI
Ghost Turn off enemy physics
Golrg Big characters
Hicup Randomly bounce character around the screen
Ifall Trip over!
Lunar Reduce gravity (type again to reduce it more)
Mukor God mode
Peace Sword power-up

POWERBOAT RACING

Interplay

Back in Issue #64 we gave you four cheats to be getting along

with. But now we know them all. Just type in the following codes on the password screen:

PDL Hidden secret mine level
FAN Catamarans (Minnow)
DIP Catamarans (Pike)
URN Catamarans (Barracuda)
EPS Championship mode
PBR Slalom
ENTER THESE CODES AS YOUR PLAYER'S NAME:
WIN Always win
BAA Autopilot
SML Small boats
BIG Big heads
PDW Big engine
BIF Collisions off
FLY Fly

DEAR KEITH

He's caring, sharing and soothing, so sit back, relax and let Dr Keith solve your problem – as long as it's got nothing to do with puberty, girlfriends or sexually transmitted diseases

EXPRESS DELIVERY

Q I'm playing *The Last Express* and I can't seem to disarm the bomb that appears on the third GD. Can you offer me some concise bomb disposal advice? I'm fed up with becoming wallpaper.

Neil Brown, Isle of Man

A To disarm the bomb, first click once on the cigar box. Pick the match from your inventory and place the cursor over the pipe. Click again. Turn the box around until you see the hinges. Click the 'hand' cursor and you should be able to open the box. Now take the telegram from Tyler and wedge it between the moving metal parts. Bomb disarmed. Problem solved.

SWITCH THE GAME

Q I'm playing *Hopkins FBI* and I seriously can't believe you gave it just four per cent! This game has given me masses of enjoyment and I've reached the Dome near the end. Now I can't figure out how to push the two switches. Any ideas? Dh, sorry, I doubt you played it that far, ye of little faith!

Bryan Lamb, Hook

A You're right, I never got that far – I've got a life. However, I do know what to do and it's pretty damn easy: move Samantha and Hopkins to Sector 1B (you can't move both characters at the same time, so you'll have to move them separately), then just get each character to push a switch. The metal plaque moves and a tunnel appears. Now you can carry on torturing yourself. Weirdo.

MAD FOR IT

Q I'm in the Lost Village section of *Sanitarium* and I can't get through the electric maze. How do you do it?

Liz Beak, Newquay

A It really is just timing. You have to watch the electricity really carefully and then go from there. Sorry Liz – try harder.

THE LION'S SHARE

Q I bought *The Lion King* for my nipper and he's screaming for some kind of cheat which he assures me exists. Do you have any idea what this is? If so, could you print it? Maybe then I can stretch out on the sofa and watch some football.

Alan, Derby, email

A Type 'DWARF' on the title screen (the first screen you see once the game has loaded) and then press 'L' during the game to skip to the next level. Enjoy the footie.

SPOILS OF WAR

Q How can I bribe the computer players in *Warlords III*? No matter what I offer, they never seem to be tempted.

Bazza P, Grimsby

A Quite simply, don't bribe them. It's a bit of a weird one, this, because as far as I can tell none of the computer players ever take bribes. It's a shame, but sadly true.

FLAME GRILLED

Q Can you help me with *Command & Conquer*? I'm stuck where I have to rescue a missing member of the GDI codenamed Delphi. Once I've set up my base and started saving for a weapons factory, thousands of blasted Flame Tanks keep coming and barbecuing everything I own.

Alex Hunt, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

A You're probably setting up your base in the wrong location. The best course of action is to immediately march along the coast to the right. Don't worry about the turrets, just keep on walking past them. Eventually you'll run into a tank, but your grenadiers should be able to take that out easily. Keep following the cliffs along to the right until you hit the crops. Set up your base there. When the flamers come along, defeat them with tanks backed up by APCs or guard towers. And that's it. Good luck.

MOMENTARY LAPSE OF REASON

Q How do I get past the snake on the wall in *Time Lapse*? Any idea?

Tony Arina, Market Harborough

A When you come to the snake, you have to imagine the footprints beneath our slithering friend are marked A to H. You then click on them (1 for once, 2 for twice) in the following order: C2, D2, G1, F1, G2, D1, B1, D1, B1, C1, H1, E1, A1, E1, H1, C1, B1, D2, G1, D1, B1, C1, H1, C1, B1, D2, F1, A1, F1, G1. If you make a mistake you have to start again. When you've finished, the snake rattles its tail and you can continue.

WONG QUESTION?

Q What do I do with Wong's body in *The X-Files*? My excessive experimentation yields nothing.

James Pembleton, Ilford

A Poor Wong was smothered with malignant tumours. If you ask what could have caused the cancer, Truitt suggests radioactive materials. This statement activates the Tarakan Idea icon. Now use Wong's Drugs Idea icon on the coroner, quickly followed by the Tarakan Idea. It seems there are two FBI agents involved. Select 'Who were the FBI agents?' and eventually the coroner offers to show you the exhumed Tarakan corpses.

Talk to Astadourian and ask any question. She gives her theory on smuggling and decides to be your partner. You can now travel to the Seattle crime lab.

UNDER PRESSURE

Q I'm playing *Black Dahlia*. What's the password to open the secret door near the pressure gauges in the sewers?

Yvonne Mitchell, Gateshead

A Just type 'PRESSURE'. Honestly, that's all there is to it.

MECH COMMANDER

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW

Need a bit of help waging war against the Clan? If you do you're in luck, as **Andrew Wright** explains how to get the most out of your Mechs

★ REVIEWED PCZ #66 SCORE 85%



This is a blistering real-time combat game in which you have to complete five operations, each one of which has six separate missions. You should find them simple to start off with, but be warned: they gradually get harder.

A run-through of the 30 missions would leave us with little space for anything else, so instead here are the finer points of Mech combat. After that you're on your own!

To wage a successful campaign against the Clan you have to plan your missions carefully, and that includes picking the right Mech for the job. You start the game with two Commandos, which are cheap scout Mechs. They're best with an LRM pack or two so they can stand off and snipe at turrets or join in firefights from a safe distance. Add lightweight SRMs or lasers for close defence. Replace them as soon as you can.

WELCOME TO THE MACHINES

Firestarters are better-armoured, better-equipped and just as fast as Commandos; you automatically start off with an

extra weapons version that has a handy PPC.

Ravens are the best light Mechs – it's possible to recover one, a Raven-W, in Op 1 mission 3. Its sensors are well worth having, but the default weapon load needs beefing up with an extra laser or two in place of the SRMs, and perhaps an LRM pack.

You can salvage a Hollander II in mission 2 if you're slow to get to the exit point. It's basically a one-weapon platform, and that's one thing you can't afford to have, especially when it takes up 45 tons of dropship space. When the Gauss rifle runs out it's all but useless, so replace it with a PPC or large laser and extra short-range weapons.

Slow and well-armoured, the Hunchback also relies on one weapon – the heavy autocannon. Rip it out, pack it with short-range weapons and treat it as a close-combat Mech, perhaps adding a medium- or long-range weapon for good measure.

The Centurion is usually available for purchase after the first mission and it's well worth having all the way through the campaign. Consider removing the ammo-hungry



Hopefully they'll be able to salvage this Uller – it's well-armed and fast.

CHOOSING WEAPON LOADS

There are no hard and fast rules for weapons. You might prefer to fight more battles from long range, or to get in close and slug it out quickly. You could also mix and match with both long- and short-range weapons, or give some Mechs a stand-off role and others an up-front one

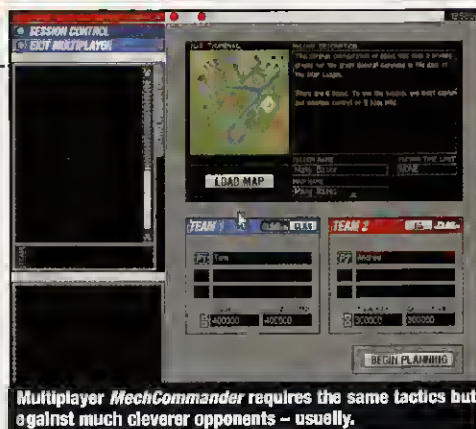
- 1 There are no bonus points for under-equipping Mechs, so fit them all out as best you can.
- 2 If a good Inner Sphere weapon appears in the purchase menu, try and buy it even if you can't use it straightaway – another 'unit' may well buy it in the meantime and it will then disappear from the purchase menu.
- 3 Never sell Clan weapons unless you're absolutely forced to. You can never buy them back. Only a tool would sell a Clan ER PPC or a heavy ultra-autocannon.
- 4 Projectile weapons can run out of ammo unless you take steps to conserve it. This usually involves having the Mech hang back in minor skirmishes so it can't use a particular weapon.



- 5 Facing fixed defences and turrets? Then consider equipping a scout Mech with long-range weapons. You can stand off and destroy the emplacements without taking fire in return.
- 6 Always give a Mech at least one or two short-range non-projectile weapons (lasers) for dealing with swarms of elementals or vehicles.
- 7 Use Clan weapons wherever possible – they're better all round.
- 8 Cluster your weapons by range so that most can be fired simultaneously. A good close-combat mix would be a heavy autocannon plus four lasers. At short range it'll do some serious damage to any Clan Mech. Don't forget that a Mech equipped with both medium- and long-range weapons can fire both at medium range.
- 9 Remember the minimum ranges. A Gauss rifle can't fire inside 50 metres, so it's no use putting it on a Mech you intend to use at short range.
- 10 The main objective is to kill enemy Mechs, and to do that you need to pierce their armour and inflict some damage. One heavy-damage weapon is more effective than lots of smaller ones because the latter hit different parts of the body, spreading out the damage; one devastating hit will remove the armour on the hit location and deliver the rest of the damage to vital components.

autocannon, though, and add an energy weapon or two so it remains effective throughout each mission.

Of the remaining Inner Sphere Mechs, the Catapult, Jagermech and Awesome are more flexible and can be used in any role, with good armour, adequate speed and lots of firepower. A Catapult makes a good fire-support platform and it can slug it out in the front line if needed, but only the Awesome is really worth buying. Its massive 50-odd tons of weapon space and default load – three PPCs – can reduce almost any Mech to a pile of scrap iron in no time. You can't use the Atlas on some missions because it takes up too much dropship space – only consider buying one if you have spare cash or you haven't salvaged any heavy Clan Mechs.



BRINGING HOME THE GOODS – SALVAGE

The best way to salvage a Mech is to *only just* destroy it. Luck plays a part here – sometimes you won't be able to salvage a Mech no matter how hard you try. If the engine explodes, that's it, it's gone forever

One trick is to take the Mech's legs out, disabling it in a way that won't ruin it completely. However, that can take much longer and will almost certainly mean you take more damage from it.

To improve your chances, bring the enemy down quickly until its status is red and then back off. Send only one or two Mechs with light weapons to finish it off. By this time, few of the enemy Mech's weapons will be tiring anyway so it is much less dangerous.

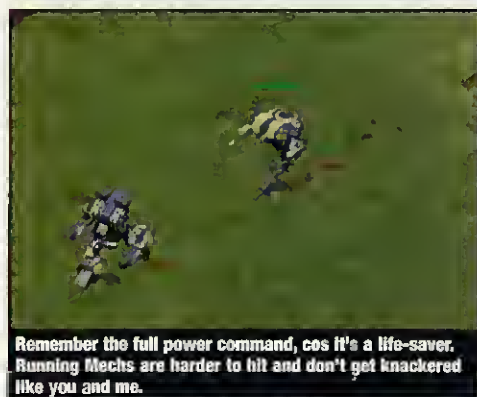
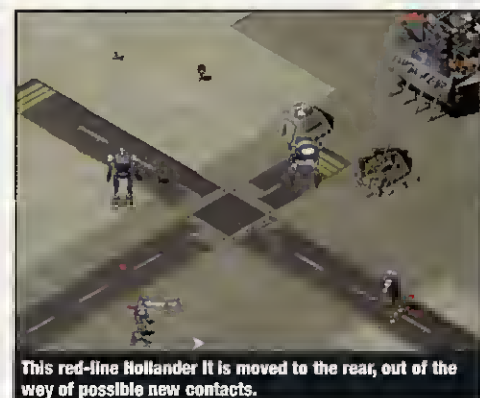
If you use a Gauss rifle to give the *coupe de grâce* to a red-line Clan Mech, there won't be much to pick up afterwards. But the humble laser causes low damage and is perfect for finishing off Clan Mechs for salvage.



HOW TO KICK CLAN ASS

Building up an arsenal of destructive weapons is one thing, but you also need to know how to use them properly

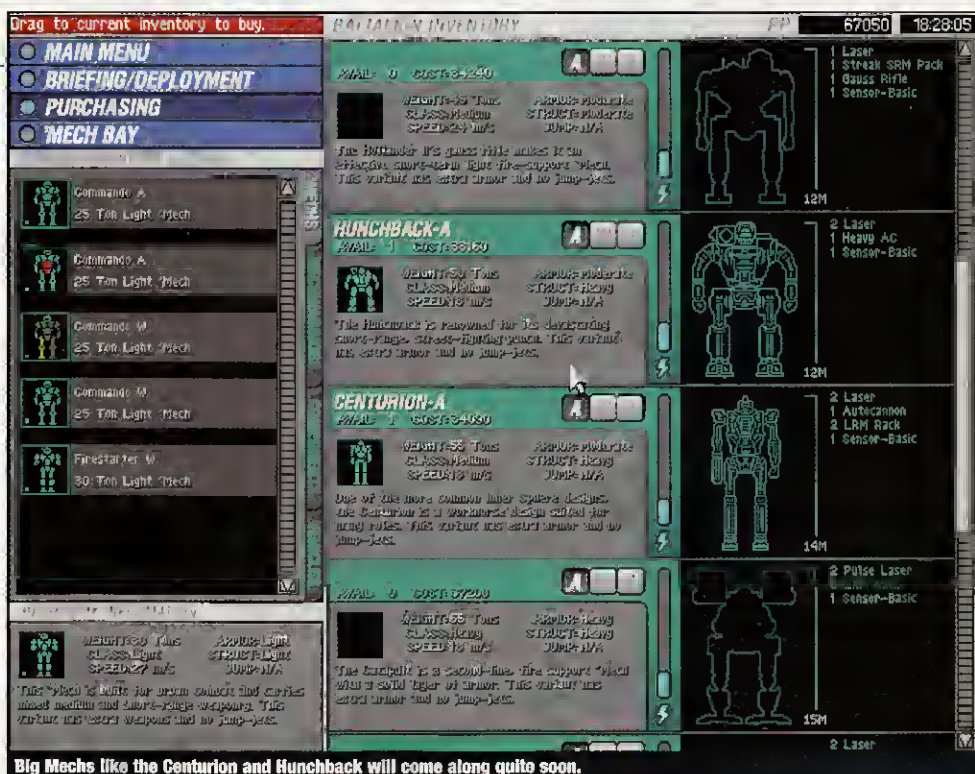
- 1 Aiming at a specific part of an enemy Mech (using the numeric keypad) reduces the overall number of hits. It's a tactic that's best used at short range with very potent weapons to ensure rapid destruction – a head shot, for example. Don't bother aiming at the head of a running Commando or other light Mech – you'll be there for weeks.
- 2 Keep Mechs that rely on projectile weapons out of the skirmishes with small vehicles and turrets. Use them only against other Mechs or more threatening vehicles such as the Shrek.
- 3 You don't need to fight everything. In Op1 mission 3, you can escape safely without fighting the Clan's Madcat, for example. The only reason to take it on is to try and salvage it. If you do, it's a big bonus and will make the next few missions much easier.
- 4 Concentrate your forces and firepower and destroy one enemy Mech or other threat at a time.
- 5 The Clan will do the same, so make sure you keep the targeted Mech running (hold down the spacebar and click). Always attack with your heavy Mechs first so that the Clan picks one of them to fire at first.
- 6 Keep all your Mechs moving when they fight. They will still target their weapons but will be harder to hit.
- 7 Watch your sensors. Try to avoid areas with big clusters of enemy units. Over time you can work out Clan patrol patterns and subsequently use that information to avoid them.
- 8 Use the high ground – you can see much further.
- 9 When you're up against fortified positions, pick off the turrets from long range then back off. Hopefully you can lure defenders out into the open.
- 10 Don't charge into torts through gates; select a point in the wall and break in. Try to capture the turret control towers if you need to defend the base or want to turn their guns on the enemy.



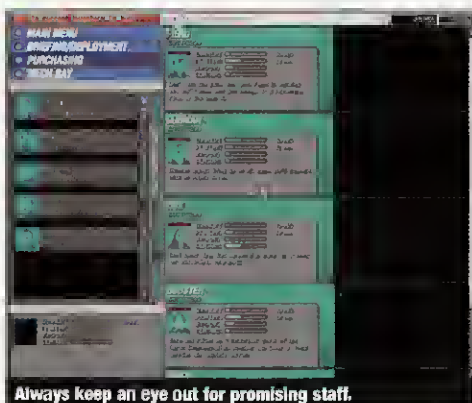
MISSION PLANNING

Each mission has two distinct phases, planning and execution, but the two are inextricably linked. What you choose to deploy before you land will affect the way you fight any battles on the ground.

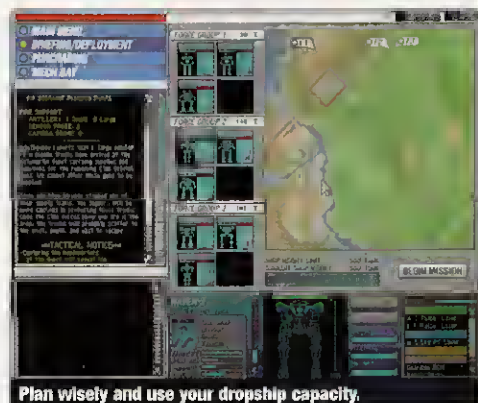
- 1 Look at the maximum drop weight and decide which Mechs to take along and how much extra space to leave unused for your low-ball bonus.
- 2 Remember that low-balling, taking up 10 or 20 less dropship points than the maximum, is a risk. If you end up slugging it out, the extra damage to your Mechs may negate any bonus due to the extra repair costs.
- 3 Never low-ball by much if you expect some good salvage. As early as Op1 in mission 3 you can hang around the extraction point and fight a difficult battle with a Hollander II. If you can salvage that, you'll have some nice firepower and a 45-ton Mech.
- 4 If you're expecting a slugfest or you expect to take bigger Clan Mechs, then break out the heavy weapons and big Mechs. Remember that in a slugfest match, two 50-ton Mechs will usually get the better of four 25-tonners.
- 5 Never dismiss a MechWarrior to get cash. They cost nothing to maintain and you'll eventually need them all to pilot additional Mechs.
- 6 Always put your best MechWarriors in your best Mechs.
- 7 Remember that one of your MechWarriors will need to gain veteran status before you can deploy heavy Mechs, so try and keep the same pilot as point man in each mission as they will earn more experience there.
- 8 The Guardian ECM suite is useful to take along because it almost guarantees you'll see enemy Mechs before they see you.
- 9 Consider some special help. Mine-layers are invaluable, especially in defence. You can effectively block off several lines of approach as long as you work them from the outside in.
- 10 Refit trucks are worth having on high-load missions because you can recharge weapons that are low on ammunition.



Big Mechs like the Centurion and Hunchback will come along quite soon.



Always keep an eye out for promising staff.



Plan wisely and use your dropship capacity.



TOP GUNS

MechCommander's weapons are listed in order of decreasing range and 'power' – a number equal to the number of damage points it can deliver in 30 seconds of firing that gives you a good guide to the effectiveness of a weapon

You should also always take the load value (see the table, right) into account. There's no point in having one weapon taking up all your tonnage, because if it runs out or gets knocked out by a random shot, the Mech will be useless. A good spread of weapons is always better than a single heavy-damage weapon.

The same table also shows availability – the mission in which you can first purchase the weapon. In some cases Clan equivalents can be captured much earlier.

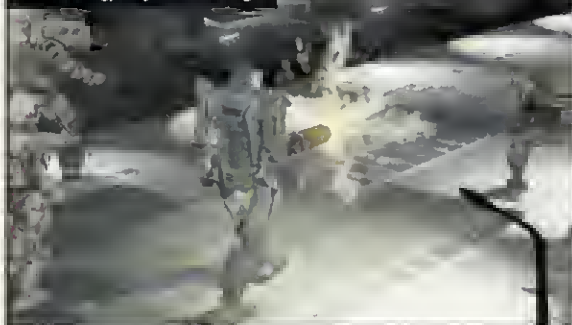
★ **Best short-range weapons:** the heavy flamer deals out concentrated damage and can be used to give light Mechs some teeth. Captured Clan versions weigh less and fire faster. Streak SRMs are space-efficient and devastating – another good short-range option.

★ **Best medium-range weapons:** the large laser concentrates damage and never runs out of ammo. Its low weight just gives it the edge over the PPC and autocannon.

★ **Best long-range weapon:** the Gauss rifle is one of the real heavy hitters but its limited ammo makes it a dodgy choice on long missions. Don't dismiss the light and effective LRM packs. And if you happen to 'liberate' a Clan ER PPC, guard it with your life! It's probably the best of the lot.

★ **Worst weapon:** the light autocannon lacks punch, can run out of projectiles and is relatively heavy.

Remember, kids: bangers are not for throwing, they're for eating.



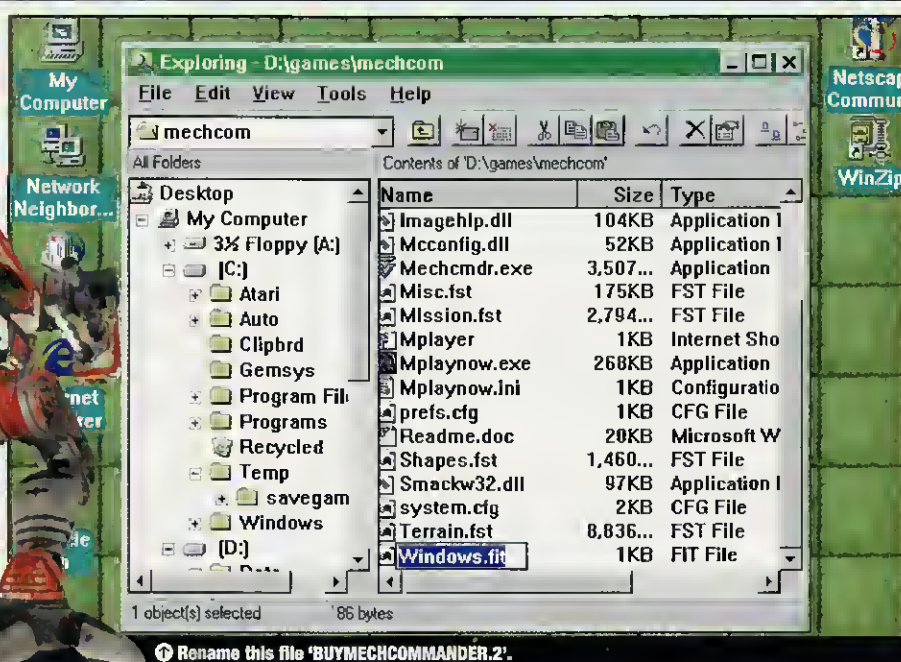
WEAPON	POWER	RANGE	LOAD	AVAILABILITY
Clan Gauss rifle	45	L	13.5	–
Clan ER PPC	45	L	13.5	–
Gauss rifle	45	L	16.5	Op1 M6
Clan large ER laser	30	L	10	–
ER PPC	30	L	14.5	Op2 M5
Large ER laser	24	L	11	Op2 M1
Clan light ultra AC	22.5	L	8.5	–
Light ultra AC	22.5	L	11	Op3 M4
Light AC	15	L	9.5	Start
Clan LRM pack	9	L	3	–
LRM pack	9	L	4	Start
Clan ultra AC	45	M	13.5	–
Clan large pulse laser	37.5	M	11	–
AC	36	M	15.5	Start
Large pulse laser	30	M	12	Op2 M5
PPC	30	M	12	Op2 M1
Large laser	24	M	9.5	Op1 M4
Clan ER laser	12	M	3.5	–
Clan heavy AC	90	S	21	–
Heavy AC	60	S	19.5	Op2 M3
Clan heavy flamer	25	S	7	–
Clan streak SRM pack	20	S	5	–
Heavy flamer	20	S	8	Start
Clan pulse laser	17	S	4	–
Pulse laser	17	S	6	Op1 M4
Streak SRM pack	15	S	5	Op2 M6
Laser	12	S	4	Start
Clan SRM pack	10	S	3	–
SRM pack	7.5	S	3	Start

Notes: AC = autocannon. ER = extra range. PPC = particle projector cannon. S/M/L = short-/medium-/long-range. A dash (–) means it can never be purchased. 'Start' means it's usually available from the start; Op1 M4, for example, means it's available from Operation 1 mission 4.

AND IF YOU FINALLY DECIDE YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH...

You can always cheat. Look inside the folder where you've installed *MechCommander* for a file called **WINDOWS.FIT** and rename it in Explorer to **BUYMECHCOMMANDER.2**. Ignore Windows' protests (if there are any). Now try the following cheats typed in on the battlefield:

OSMIU Invulnerable Mechs and vehicles
LORRIE Repairs all damage and replenishes ammo
DEADEYE Turns your MechWarriors into crackshots



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COMMANDOS: BEHIND ENEMY LINES

STRATEGY GUIDE: PART 2

So you've made it this far – well done! But that was the easy bit, after all. You ain't seen nuthin' yet. Allow Steve 'Sapper' Hill to take you gently by the hand...

★ REVIEWED PCZ #66 SCORE 87%

⌚ Ensure that all your soldiers are well clear before the sapper blows up the fuel tank.

⌚ Use the Green Beret to pick off stray soldiers, remembering to conceal their corpses.



MISSION 11

IN THE SOUP

The Green Beret's decoy skill and the spy's distracting skill are very helpful at the tricky start of this mission. Once you have cleared the first area, use the spy to kill the two guards on the eastern mound; this enables your Green Beret to climb up there without being seen.

From this point, work your way northwards to secure the escape truck. You then need to use a combination of spy, Green Beret and sniper to clear a path so that the driver can reach the truck. It's then just a matter of gunning

down any guards and reinforcements that are left so the sapper can set the bombs. If you've run out of bombs, you can use the oil truck to shoot the fuel tanker just as it passes between the two north-eastern oil rigs – this will destroy them both. Once you're done, escape to the west.

MISSION 12

UP ON THE ROOF

This mission requires the spy to kill the guards around the Green Beret's and sniper's hideouts so that they can escape. Once they're free, it's just a case of carefully killing all the guards and



⌚ The hostage is imprisoned in this jail, so you'd better get rescuing.

⌚ Once you've done the business, secrete the hostage into this Kübelwagen and make good your escape.

ESCAPE KÜBELWAGEN



MISSION 13

④ When the supply ship arrives, the gate opens, enabling the diver to swim through.

⑤ Get the diver into this mini submarine and he can start firing torpedoes at the battleship.

freeing the hostage. There is no real strategy, except to be quiet and reach the escape truck.

MISSION 13

DAVID AND GOLIATH

Use the Green Beret to climb up the dock wall and kill the four guards, then swim your marine up to the main entrance and wait for the supply boat to open the gate. Once you're through, kill the guard by the cannon and open the gate. Get all your men into the boat and move them to the main



MISSION 13

entrance, then use the marine's scuba gear. The marine gets out of the boat but everyone else stays in.

Use the marine to kill the two guards on the small pier just north of the entrance, and at the same time use the sniper (he can shoot from the boat) to kill the guard on

the south-western point of the main dock.

The rest of the guards are quite tricky, but you can use any remaining sniper bullets and the beartrap to kill them. As soon as you can, get your marine into the sub and blow up the large boat with the sub's torpedo. The alarm



MISSION 14

④ Take advantage of the fact that the sniper can use his rifle from the boat.

then goes off, so use your sapper to blow up the fuel tanks quickly. You can use the large cannon on the southern dock to destroy any patrol boats. This should secure your escape.

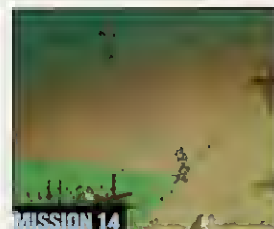
MISSION 14

D-DAY KICK-OFF

Once again, there is no real easy strategy to this mission – just be as quiet as you can. The decoy combined with the beartrap makes an effective weapon, and the marine is also useful for sneaking out of the water and killing the guards on the beach. The Green Beret can climb on to the central mound and sneak up behind some of the guards, and the sniper can shoot from the boat, although you need to save some bullets for the guards on top of the cannons. The mission becomes easier as soon as you have control of the tank. All you need to do then is use the barrels and your bombs to destroy the guns.

④ The spy can make great use of the uniform, providing he can get hold of it.

⑤ Once you've slain the butcher, head for the cemetery and use this truck to escape.



MISSION 14

④ The diver can emerge from the sea, kill a few soldiers, then dive back in.

MISSION 15

END OF THE BUTCHER

Avoiding the five-man patrol, you need to work your way up to the tall building in the north-west where the spy's uniform is. Once you have the uniform, get your sniper onto the flat area on the roof. From here you can kill the General in the garden below. The alarm then goes off and you need to get into a few gunfights to reach the enemy HQ on the east side.

As soon as you have reached the HQ, move a car in front of the HQ and shoot the engine from a distance. You may find it helpful to kill the patrol that is guarding your escape truck before you blow up the HQ. The key to completing the first part of this mission is to study the timing of the five-man patrol – you have to be patient, as their patrol is quite long.



MISSION 15



MISSION 15



MISSION 16

⚡ You can use the train intermittently to provide cover for your commandos.



MISSION 16

⚡ Get it wrong and the Germans won't hesitate to blow up the bridge.



MISSION 17

⚡ Set fire to the split oil blocks off this area, enabling you to free the prisoners.

MISSION 16

STOP WILDFIRE

Try not to set off the alarm at the start of this mission, and save one sniper bullet for the end of the mission. Work your way down to the spy's uniform on the other side of the railway. Once you have it, use your spy to kill as many guards as possible without setting off the alarm. As soon as you can, move your sniper down the east side of the river bank until you have a clear shot at the detonator on the east side of the bridge.

Next, move your spy behind the enemy sapper on the west side of the bridge, and swim your diver next to the small island in the middle of the river under the bridge. You need to kill the enemy sappers simultaneously, so start by killing the two on the centre island with the diver, then use the spy to kill the west-side sapper, and as the east-side sapper

approaches his detonator, shoot him with the sniper before he reaches it. You can then escape in the truck.

MISSION 17

BEFORE DAWN

Use the spy to go through the enemy camp and open the bridge. Then use the spy and the Green Beret to clear the area just above the bridge. Use gunshots to lure guards over to your position and use the rocks as cover – try not to get too close to the camp as you will set off the alarm.

Move your men next to the crane outside the camp and then close the bridge to block off any guards. Next, use the spy to open the taps on the oil tanks. When no one is looking, shoot the oil – it will ignite and block off any reinforcements.

Before you release the prisoners you may want to clear the top area. To do this, use your



MISSION 17

⚡ Following the great escape, lead the freed prisoners into this truck and step on it.

diver to swim to the top-right area and work his way left; you could also use the spy to distract some guards to make the diver's job easier. You can then release the prisoners and escape.

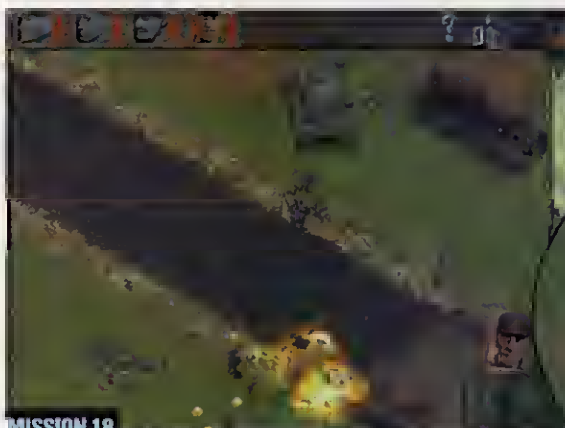
MISSION 18

THE FORCE OF CIRCUMSTANCE

Start the mission by shooting off a couple of rounds to lure the guards over. The alarm goes off, but only a few guards come over. Clear out the area above – you can use your pistols to a certain extent, but don't fire near the enemy barracks by the train tracks. You can, however, fire near the smaller barracks close to your original position as there are only a few men in it.

⚡ Once the diver has slaughtered everyone on this small island, the train will be of good use.

MISSION 18



MISSION 18

⚡ Once you get in the tank, it's bedlam, so make the most of it and kill loads of Germans.

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, CHEAT!

If you get really stuck, you may find these passwords helpful. All passwords give the maximum score possible up to that point in the game

Mission 1	Baptism Of Fire	No need – first mission
Mission 2	A Quiet Blow-Up	YJXB
Mission 3	Reverse Engineering	4FQBF
Mission 4	Restore Pride	5DNCQ
Mission 5	Blind Justice	6S5TL
Mission 6	Menace Of The Leopold	AT1WN
Mission 7	Chase Of The Wolves	D9VJB
Mission 8	Pyrotechnics	WQ9XB
Mission 9	A Courtesy Call	Q2AXT
Mission 10	Operation Icarus	TUGPD
Mission 11	In The Soup	9WDDW
Mission 12	Up On The Roof	UVHDC
Mission 13	David And Goliath	FBK48
Mission 14	D-Day Kick-Off	WABDW
Mission 15	The End Of The Butcher	KEWD3
Mission 16	Stop Wildfire	R7IP3
Mission 17	Before Dawn	FXIMV
Mission 18	The Force Of Circumstance	ZZMJV
Mission 19	Frustrate Retaliation	BHCWN
Mission 20	Operation Valhalla	C7KWW



MISSION 19

❶ Flicking this switch reverses the direction of the conveyor belt, enabling your boys access.

Use the diver to transport the driver to the other side of the river. You need to kill some guards on the top island to get the boat. Next, move both diver and driver down to the tank in the corner. Once you have possession of the tank you can take out as many guards as necessary in order for your diver to ferry the sapper over to the bottom island and collect the explosives. Once you have them you can blow up the bridge and escape in the truck.

MISSION 19

FRUSTRATE RETALIATION

You need to work your way down to the small bay in the bottom-left of the top area. This is best achieved by moving in an anti-clockwise direction from where you started the mission. Place a decoy over an open beartrap to lure in and kill guards in areas where they will not be spotted. You may find it helpful to blow up the enemy barracks in the top-left corner – this will, however, make your mission more difficult. Save at least two bullets for the dogs in the lower sections, and another two bullets for the gunners on the river banks.

You need to clear the lower-left area of the map before moving upstream to the bay next to the rail tracks. Once you have crossed the tracks, use your last sniper bullet to kill the dog in the kennel, then climb the wall with the Green Beret so he can flick the conveyor belt switch. The conveyor belt will now have changed direction, so the rest of your team can use it to get into the base.

Use the barrels and your bombs to blow up the missiles

❷ The Nazi headquarters in flames: Merry Christmas, war is over.

and, if you wish, to blow up the enemy barracks to stop enemy reinforcements.

MISSION 20

OPERATION VALHALLA

Use the Green Beret to scale the wall to his north and kill as many guards as necessary so that you can crawl along the outer wall without being seen. Make sure you kill the guard on top of the enemy HQ. Crawl along the outer wall killing the guards on the way. Once you reach the east side of the wall, kill the guard above the underwater gate and the patrolling guard just north of



MISSION 19 DETONATOR

❶ Some cunningly placed barrels will set off a chain reaction, destroying the V2 rockets.

there. You can then use the sniper to kill some of the guards on the topmost wall, but save one bullet for the man on the large cannon.

Climb the Green Beret down the ladder into the shooting range and open the underwater gate. Move your diver into the shooting range and lure as many guards as possible. Once you've cleared that area, take out the guards on the southern exit and clear the area to the left. You can then kill the guards on the western exit and

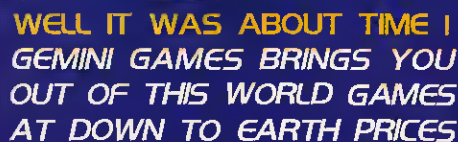
gain access to the spy's uniform. Use the spy and the Green Beret to clear the eastern area to gain access to the tank. Remember to use the sniper to take out the man on the cannon. Use the tank to destroy the missiles, enemy barracks and as many guards as you can. This should make it easier for the sapper to reach the enemy HQ and blow it up. You can then escape in the tank. PCZ



MISSION 20



MISSION 20



⑤ GIVE THE DOGS A PHONE

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BILL GATES WRITES

Q I get the general feeling that not many people like or have been advised to run Windows 98 as a replacement to Windows 95. This is utter crap (*Don't sit on the fence, will you? – Ed*).

I was running the very latest version of Win95 before I changed to Win98 and even then my system was locking, freezing, monitor shutting down, applications not running properly etc. In fact, under Win95 I was having about six system crashes a week, especially using BT's Wireplay service.

I installed and have been using Win98 since its launch and have not had one single, tiny, eenie weenie, minuscule error on my system. Fantastic! So to me it really was worth the money and it was definitely worth getting – I was pulling my hair out!

Let's hope that Microsoft have got it right this time. I would recommend that anyone experiencing similar difficulties under Win95 should upgrade right now!

Carl Ritchie, email

A If you've found that Win98 has stabilised your troublesome system, then good for you. But what about all those people who are running Win95 without any regular or serious problems? Like, for example, just about the whole of the PC ZONE office. Simply because things are working fine as they are, very few of us have switched from Win95, although we'll all no doubt get around to upgrading to Win98 eventually.

Also, did you try a completely clean install of Win95 before you ditched it? In our experience it gets more and more unstable (not to mention slower) simply because it gets bogged down with rogue files and drivers from the software and hardware you install (and then uninstall) over a period of time.

While we're on the subject, we picked up a useful upgrade tip from Microsoft's website at www.microsoft.com (you'll also find dozens more useful tips there).

WHICH 3D?

Q I would like to ask your expert advice on which 3Dfx card I should buy. I have decided it is almost essential to have one as there are so many good games that I cannot play without one. Which in your opinion is the best one to get, bearing in mind the different prices?

Rob Hirst, email

A Simple answer: if you're on a tight budget, get a 3Dfx Voodoo-based board (prices start at around £75) – many of us here at ZONE still use 'em. If, however, you want increased performance (higher resolutions and faster frame rates, especially on fast Pentium IIs) and are willing to pay the extra, go for a 3Dfx Voodoo2-based card. The 8Mb version (from about £150) will be sufficient for most gamers, but 12Mb versions (from £200) are also available.

So, which model exactly? Well, all the Voodoo2 boards we've seen have offered near-identical performance (it was

a similar story with the first-generation Voodoo-based boards). You may want to stick with brand names you know (if only because the quality of the software drivers and technical support is likely to be better), but ultimately your decision should probably be based around price and bundled software. We suggest you check out magazines such as *PC Pro* and *Computer Shopper* and hunt down the best deal.

Incidentally, with so many manufacturers now offering Voodoo2 boards (and some reporting relatively disappointing sales), not to mention increased competition on the horizon from other 3D accelerator chipsets such as S3's Savage 3D, NEC/Videologic's PowerVR SG and 3Dfx's own Banshee, you can expect Voodoo2 prices to drop significantly (a bit of healthy competition is always good news for us punters) in the run-up to Christmas.

SERIAL NETWORKING

Q Many games I have, such as *EF2000*, require a network to work in multiplayer mode, but I only have a serial link/modem. I was wondering if it is possible to link these games through the null-modem cable and confuse the game into thinking I am on a network?

Robin Kilpatrick, email

A Last time we tried to do something like this was in the dark old days of DOS with, er... Actually, no one can even remember which game we were trying to run. Whatever, we never did find a serial solution (and we still don't know of anything – if anyone out there does, drop us a line and let us know), but we did come across something called PIPX (a trial version of which you'll find at ftp.lpt.com/parallel/pipxtd.zip) which emulates an IPX network across a parallel connection. Can any readers offer some more advice? ☺

THERE'S THIS GAME CALLED QUAKE, AND...

Q I am part of a UK-based *Quake* clan with quite a bit of experience with modems, pings etc. With the following system tweaks I've found it's possible to get low ping times of around 120-130ms with my unbranded 56K modem (the changes might even help with 28.8K or 33.6K modems). I figured your readers might also like to experiment.

1. Firstly, make notes and keep a record of all your original Dial-up Network and COM port settings in case you have to change them back again.
2. Assuming you have access to the Internet, download PPP Boost (it can easily be found using a search engine such as www.altavista.digital.com/) and Dial up Networking v1.2/1.2b from www.microsoft.com/ (this is not necessary for Win98 users).
3. Run PPP Boost and leave everything set except the RWIN settings – change this to 3000.
4. Open System from the Control Panel, select Device Manager, then find the COM port for your modem and set the baud rate to 115200bps for a 56K modem (or 57600bps for a 33.6K or 28.8K modem).
5. Restart your computer.
6. Go to your Dial-up Networking folder and, assuming you're using Wireplay, right-click on the Wireplay icon. Go to Properties, then Configure, hit the Connection tab, then Port Settings, and make sure that both slidey things (*Is this a technical term? – Ed*) are set to the max. Hit OK, then go to Advanced. Turn off Error Control (change it back later if it has a detrimental effect), set Use Flow Control and put it to Hardware (RTS/CTS).

In the extra settings box, type X3 (the effectiveness of this will differ between modems, but it worked for me). If this doesn't work,

leave the box blank or put in AT&F. Go to OK, then the General tab, and make sure the Only Connect At This Speed is unchecked. Hit OK and go to the Server Types tab. Uncheck all boxes except Enable Software Compression and TCP/IP. Hit OK.

7. In *Quake* itself there are two settings that can be changed from the game console – Rate and Pushlatency. The latter should be set from -100 to around -150. The rate for 56k modems should be set at around 2500 to 3500; for 33.6 or 28.8 this should be set at anything from 2500 to 3000 (you'll need to experiment with these settings).

TgH.raZ (on Wireplay), Ea.MAR1NE (on Barrysworld/Net), email

A Modem configuration, eh? Black art, or what? Still, there's some useful stuff in there for those who don't mind playing about a bit. Although, of course, we'll now get dozens of letters and emails from people with different set-ups and theories (oh, go on then, if you have to).

Anyway, TgH.raZ, Ea.MAR1NE (or whatever the hell your name is), you win this month's £50 which, we trust, you'll be sharing equally with MP.Splink and TgH.teZ who you say helped you with all this. Which reminds us: can everybody please use their real names when writing in? Cheers.



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HOW TO...

MAKE USE OF YOUR WEB SPACE

Everybody has free Web space these days, but most people don't do anything with it. Our resident Spiderman dons his guru hat and shows you how to build yourself a des res out in cyberspace

★ WORDS Phil Wand

PART ONE

WHO GIVES YOU WHAT?

Here's a little look at how many megabytes the major ISPs dish out to their customers. As you can see from the list, figures range from a measly 5Mb (poo) to unlimited (wahay!)

ISP	CONTACT ADDRESS	WEB SPACE
VIRGIN NET	www.virgin.net	10Mb
DEMON INTERNET	www.demon.net	15Mb
GLOBAL INTERNET	www.globalnet.co.uk	20Mb
PRESTEL	www.prestel.co.uk	Unlimited
DIRECT CONNECTION	www.dircon.net	20Mb
BTINTERNET	www.btinternet.com	10Mb
PIPEX DIAL	www.dial.pipex.com	5Mb

Okay, let's get straight to the point here. You have a computer. You have a modem. You have access to an electrical socket. No doubt you also have an account with an Internet Service Provider, and you have an email address. Chances are you'll have been given some free Web space – but what have you put up there? A poem? A picture of your girlfriend pulling a stupid face? Some bloke with a can of Hofmeister? A tribute to Princess Diana?

TOPTIP Check the What You Need section (page 154) before continuing, as it's important to make sure you've got the right Web widgets.

WHY DON'T YOU...

Over the next couple of issues, we'll show you how to make your very own 'proper' website from scratch and

upload it for the whole world to see. We'll get you going with an HTML editor, help you make the right choices about graphics, and give you some advice on keeping your pages minty fresh. We'll also look into the more complex side of Web authoring, such as setting up a mailing list and getting your own domain name.

For our example site we'll be focusing on silly games, jokes and pranks – something that's always been a popular subject since computers found their way into the workplace. We're going to call it 'Sillyware', and we'll even be making it live so you can try it out yourself. It's not going to be the last word in style, nor is it going to be sprawling across hundreds of pages; what it will show you are some basic rules of designing for the Web.

For your site, think of something that *you* would take time out to visit. Try to make it unusual or even slightly eccentric – with over three billion Web pages out there, you need to be different.



Fig 1: Choose a design style that reflects the theme of your site. Here we've used an unmodified font called Matisse for the main lettering, and a font called Nuptial Script for the subtitle. Just goes to show you don't need a degree in design to get things looking just right.

CONCEPTION

First let's think about what sections are needed to make Sillyware feel inviting and the sort of place people will want to come back to. The best way for us to achieve this is to use a simple layout that everyone's familiar with. So we'll have a welcome page with jumps to a file area, a news area and a contact address. Next month we'll add a box for people to sign up to our mailing list.

TOPTIP *Mailing lists are a fantastic way of keeping in touch with your visitors. You can send one email to the list and have it propagated to all your subscribers. Use it to notify people of important updates and new files, or just to generate conversation when you're bored.*

Now we've got the basic idea, we need to map it out. Whenever you design a site, don't go straight to your HTML editor, instead, go get a pen and a piece of paper and sketch out the navigation (ie how your pages link to one another). If you need inspiration from other people, start off at www.yahoo.com and go surfing. Don't worry about graphics, as you'll soon see that you don't need studio quality photographs and designer illustrations to get things looking spot on.

For our site, we're going to use *FrontPage Express* (a free download from the Microsoft website) and *JASC's excellent Paint Shop Pro*, but don't panic if you don't have either of these two packages. Whichever software you choose to use, you should be able to follow what we're doing without any difficulty. Not only have we

made things uncomplicated, using bright colours and icons to keep the pages lively, we've also kept well clear of frames, as they tend to complicate matters and are only really of use on large sites with deep or complex navigation.

IDENTITY

Let's kick things off with a brand new Sillyware logo. It's generally the best thing to do first because it instantly gives your site a personality and puts you in the mood for finishing it. Web motifs need to be big, bright, bold and, most importantly, simple – the more colours you use, the bigger your files will be; the bigger your files, the longer your page will take to download, and fewer visitors will pay a return visit.

TOPTIP *Don't use rendered 3D lettering for your logo. It's dreadfully old hat, hogs bandwidth and looks crap. Try to use a 'flat' colour GIF; and stay away from graduated fills, tints and shadows.*

We screwed the logo together in a matter of seconds in *Adobe Illustrator* using a couple of groovy fonts – you can design yours in any paint package – and then exported it as a GIF. The rule of thumb is that GIF files are excellent for line artwork or images containing a lot of 'flat' colour, and that JPEGs are better for photos and complex pictures with varied tones (**Fig 1**).

THE BACKGROUND

Now we'll move on to making the page itself. This stage is without doubt the main reason why people shy away from making their own pages – they don't understand

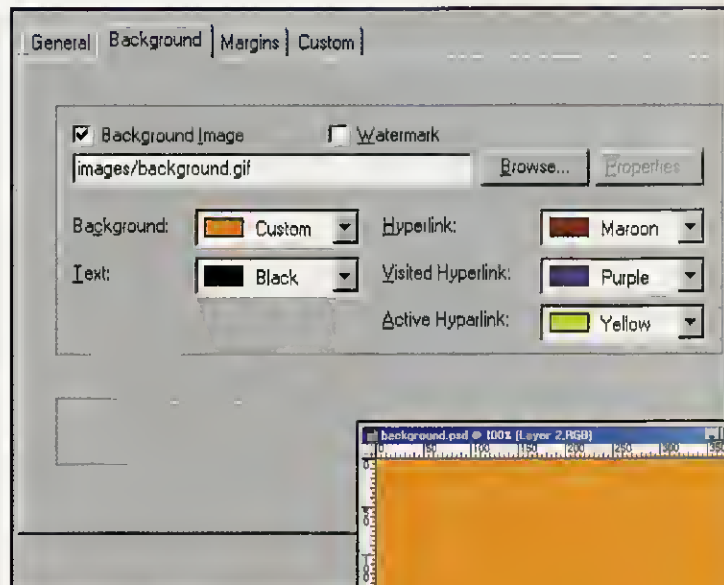


Fig 2: The page properties tab can make or break your page – choose a naff set of colours on floral wallpaper and people will either vomit in disgust or be unable to focus on the words.

Fig 2a: Whatever colours and design you use for your background, use suitable colours for the text that you place on it – basically, make sure you can read it.



HTML. Which is a shame, because you don't actually need to know HTML at all; if you can use a word processor, you can use *FrontPage* and its rivals. So, hey, let's get on with it.

The first thing we need to do is save the page – click the Save icon on the toolbar, give the page a meaningful title (we went for the adventurous 'Sillyware Homepage'), and then click the As File button to set the location on your hard drive. Since this is the first page of the site, use the name 'index.htm' – this means that the Web server shows the page by default when someone arrives at your site.

TOPTIP *Other filenames that cause the page to be shown by default include index.html, Welcome.htm and Default.htm – it all depends on your Web server's configuration. Whatever file you decide to use, never use spaces or non-alphanumeric characters in it, as this will only confuse the server.*

Next we select a background and set up some default colours. These will affect the overall appearance of the page in terms of text, links, visited links and active links (ie which colour appears when you click on things).

TOPTIP *Stay away from dark backgrounds – it's much harder to read light text on a murky background than black text on a light background. Black backgrounds are considered a no-no as they smack of free-speech campaigns and Star Trek fans.*

USEFUL BOOKMARKS

Here's a very useful set of links for anyone interested in setting up their own website

FINDMAIL www.findmail.com

Enables you to set up, manage and moderate your own mailing list for free. Includes a nifty Web-based interface, together with full list management and moderation tools.

LARABIE FONTS web.mit.edu/zudark/larabiefonts

Fantastic treasure chest of freebie Windows fonts – great for making snazzy logos, headings and funky looking buttons.

ULEAD SYSTEMS www.ulead.com

Developers of several plug-ins to help you optimise Web graphics. By using clever compression routines you'll slash your download times.

ICONFORGE www.cursorarts.com

Top-notch icon creation, extraction and editing tool. Don't be put off by the Mickey Mouse interface, it's a lot more adaptable than its rivals.

FREECODE www.freecode.com

An invaluable source of free programming tools, ranging from snippets of JavaScript to full-blown chat applications.

ARTTODAY www.arttoday.com

A bargain subscription buys you access to one of the largest royalty-free graphics repositories.

USP NETWORKS www.usp.net

The nice folks who got us the Sillyware domain and hosted all our tiles. You can search, register and pay for new domains from the comfort of your armchair.

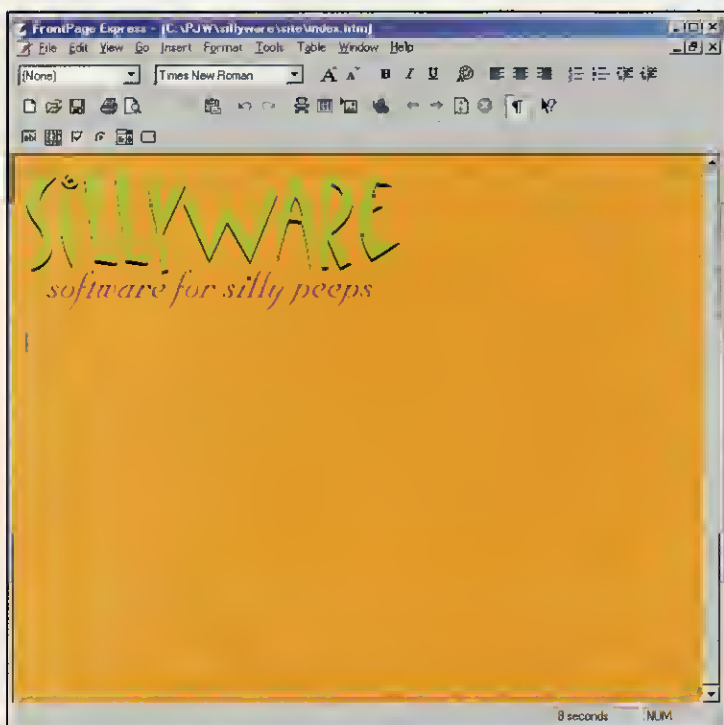


Fig 3: Adding new elements to *FrontPage* documents is a drag-and-drop dream.

Here goes, then. With a blank *FrontPage* document on the screen, right-click and select **Page Properties** (fig 2). Select the **Background** tab, check **Background Image**, and browse along to the image you want to use as the wallpaper – the same process you use for choosing your Windows desktop wallpaper. We used a simple spiral pattern that we created in *Paint Shop Pro*. Pick some suitable colours for the text on the page, and then press **OK** (fig 2a).

THE FOREGROUND

Okay. Now we've made ourselves the framework of a Web page, we need to flesh it out with some words and pictures (or text and graphics, if you want to get into design-speak). We'll put the Sillyware logo in at the top, together with some words and buttons beneath it. This is a lot easier than it sounds, so don't wimp out just yet.

TOPTIP Wash your net curtains toiled and you won't need to iron them.

First, make sure the logo is either in the same directory or in a sub-directory beneath the main index.htm file – putting it anywhere else will only confuse matters when you come to upload all the files to the server. Next, simply drag the image file onto the *FrontPage* document and let go of the mouse button. The logo appears at the top of the page (fig 3).

Now we'll add in a table. Tables are nothing complex; essentially they're a grid of rows and columns that can contain any HTML element. You can use them to regulate the appearance of your page with a strict framework, or perhaps to arrange things into columns – which is what we're going to do. In the left-hand column we're going to greet people with a few

paragraphs, and in the right-hand column provide links to other areas.

Make sure the flashing cursor is beneath the logo (if it's not, press **Enter** to create a line break) and then choose **Insert Table** from the *FrontPage* 'Table' menu (fig 4). In our case we want two columns and a single row, and we want the table to be

exactly 500 pixels wide. Make the necessary changes, hit **OK**, and it's done.

In the right-hand column we'll add some welcoming text and a link for people to mail us with some suggestions. Click on the column, then just type away; you can also cut-and-paste text direct from another application such as a word processor. Make the first paragraph bold by highlighting the text and clicking the **Bold** button on the toolbar. To add a link (ie underlined text that you can click on) at the bottom, simply highlight the appropriate text and click the **Create or Edit Hyperlink** button on the toolbar. The **Edit Hyperlink** screen appears, where you can amend or add new links to your page (fig 5).

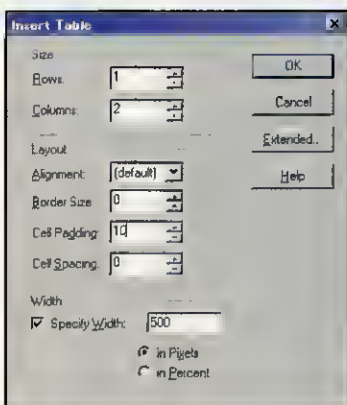
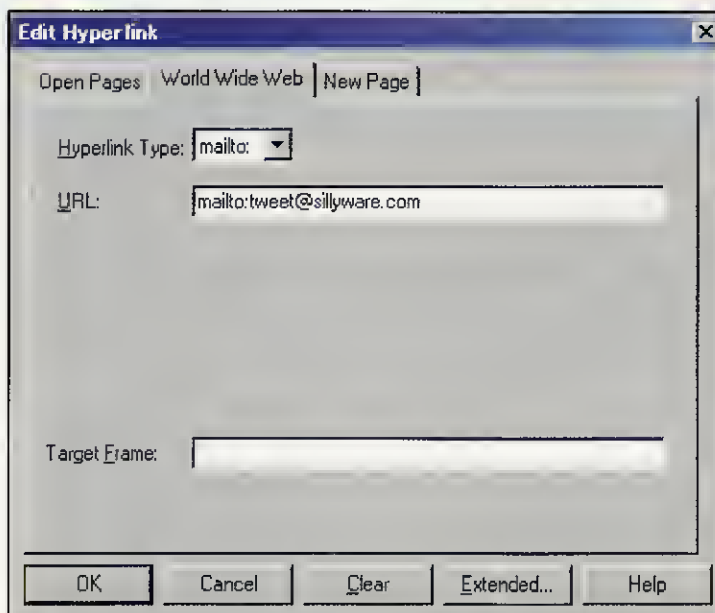


Fig 4: Inserting a table is a straightforward task – supply the basics and *FrontPage* will do the rest.

Fig 5: Here we're making a link that will generate an email when someone clicks on it, so we type 'mailto:' followed by the recipient mail address.



WHAT YOU NEED

The software tools of the trade

Making pages is just like adjusting the inlet valve clearances on a Chevy small block – a remarkably straightforward affair, as long as you have the correct tools. For our Web page we'll need three types of product – one, a page creator to generate the HTML code; two, a graphics package to manipulate the images; three, an FTP program to upload the files.

WEB PAGE CREATORS

FRONTPAGE EXPRESS £FREE <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com/>
Quick, efficient, and great to use if you already know *Word* or *Excel*.

FUSION 3.0 £176 www.netobjects.com
Enables precise placement of images and text – great for wannabe designers.

HOMESITE £79 OR **COLD FUSION STUDIO 3.1** £295 www.allaire.com
HomeSite is for mortals, *Cold Fusion Studio* is for the nuts who dig raw code.

GRAPHICS PACKAGES

PHOTOSHOP 5 £414 www.adobe.com
Undisputed king of the PC graphics packages, with only the price tag to deter you.

PAINT SHOP PRO 5 £99 www.jasc.com
If you can live with the interface, *PSP's* functionality is alongside that of *Photoshop*.

CORELORAW! £258 www.corel.com
Generally referred to as the poor man's *Photoshop*, but almost as capable.

If you're just going to stick with a personal page on free Web space, there's not much point in forking out £414 for a copy of *Photoshop* and £176 on *Fusion*. Stick with *FrontPage* and *Paint Shop Pro 5* – both excellent products – and you won't go wrong.

FTP PROGRAMS

FTPX \$30 www.ftpx.com
Great utility with an *Explorer*-like face. A bit out of date but does the job perfectly.

BULLET-PROOF FTP \$29.95 www.bftp.com
The FTP program of the moment, with a staggering number of features.

INTERNET NEIGHBOURHOOD \$26 www.knowareinc.com
A neat FTP program that integrates seamlessly with your Windows desktop.

TOPTIP People take just four seconds to decide whether they want to read your page or not, so unless you grab them with a useful link to something they need, they'll be off. Keep it simple and to the point. As a rule, paragraphs should never be longer than their width, and should always contain keywords for the search engines to pick up on.

To complete the table, all we need to do now is add in a few buttons to the other

Before you call Clara, read the small print.

"Thank you for making the Internet so easy to access." PHILIP GUDGEON, COMPUTER ENGINEER, RIPON

"Thank you for making it so clear and simple. I'll certainly recommend your service." BRUCE BIDDULPH, ARTIST, GLASGOW

"You lot are all doing a fantastic job." RICHARD PECK, STUDENT, NOTTINGHAM

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Testimonial 1 Subscription packages start from £4.69 (inc. VAT) per month. All accounts include unlimited e-mail addresses, 25MB of webspace and no connection fee. You can e-mail us at info@clara.net

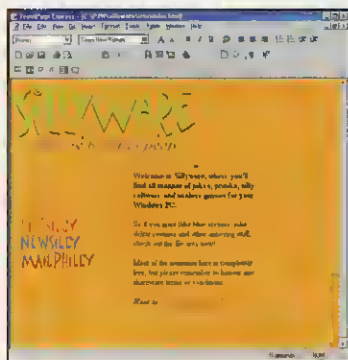


Fig 6: The Sillyware main page, with both columns now complete.

column. These are used to link to the other two areas of the site – files and news – and to provide another contact address. Again, we created our buttons in *Adobe Illustrator*, and to maintain the Sillyware style we used the same typeface as before. We exported them all as GIFs, and then dragged-and-dropped them straight into the left-hand column (fig 6).

That's our front page almost complete, but we need to tidy up a few things before

“For your site, think of something that *you* would take time out to visit. Try to make it unusual or even slightly eccentric – with over three billion Web pages out there, you need to be different”

we leave. Most obviously, you should see that the buttons have a lot of ‘dead space’ around them, and they’re floating awkwardly in the middle of their column. To fix this, right-click on the column cell itself and choose Cell Properties from the pop-up menu that appears. By default, the cell's vertical alignment is set to Middle, meaning that all elements within it sit centrally. We want them to be right at the top, so choose Top from the drop-down selection box (fig 7).

But wait. That's not all. We've still got that little problem of too much space around the buttons. So let's pull in the width of the left-hand column by defining its width manually – we'll use 160 pixels, as this is just slightly wider than the largest button. We'll also change the horizontal alignment of the cell to Right, which makes

the buttons sit flush with the text margin and help make the page look a bit more structured. Then hit the OK button.

Hmm. One remaining niggle is the way everything's squashed over to the left-hand side of the page – which is okay if you've got a small browser window, but rather wasteful if you haven't. So let's make it sit centrally: click on the logo and hit the Center button on the toolbar. Easy. Now right-click on the table and select Table Properties from the pop-up menu. Change its alignment from Default to Centre'. Alacazam – all done (fig 8).

AND FOR MY FINAL TRICK...

One thing that a lot of people tend to miss is the legal bunt at the bottom of their pages. Putting it there may seem like a chore or perhaps an irrelevancy, but everyone should do it. For starters, many of the words and phrases you might want to use on your pages (seemingly mundane ones like ‘Windows’ or ‘Pentium’) are actually the property of litigious American corporations, and you shouldn't use them without: a) acknowledging who they belong

to, and b) considering the consequences of the context in which you use them.

Also, you should state who the page belongs to – ie you. While the Web is full of borrowed ideas, if your site could generate income or is of a sensitive nature, you need to make visitors fully aware that they should not duplicate or reprint any of its contents without your prior written permission. And believe us when we say that the Web is going to line an awful lot of lawyers' pockets for the foreseeable future. [24]

★ In next month's issue (on sale Wednesday 21 October) we take a look at creating the files area of the page, which involves tracking down some prank utilities, collecting icons and then linking them all together. We'll also add in the necessary code for our Sillyware mailing list.

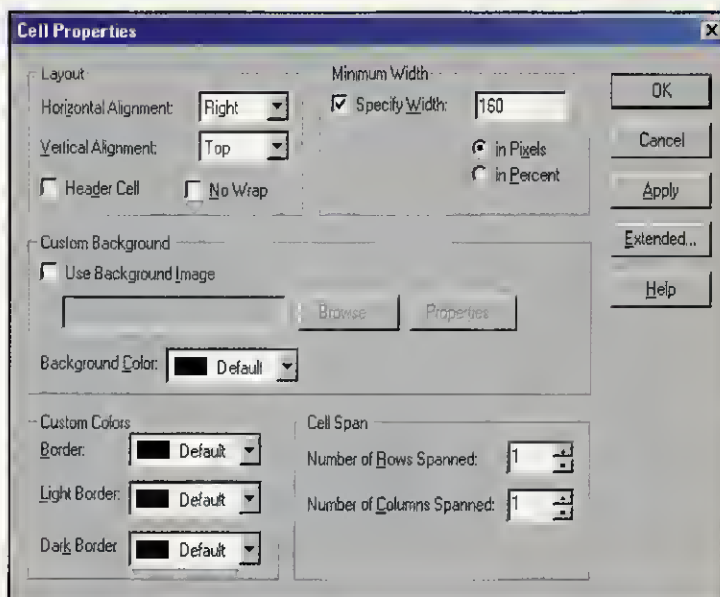


Fig 7: Cell Properties enables you to alter how the column elements appear in their boxes.

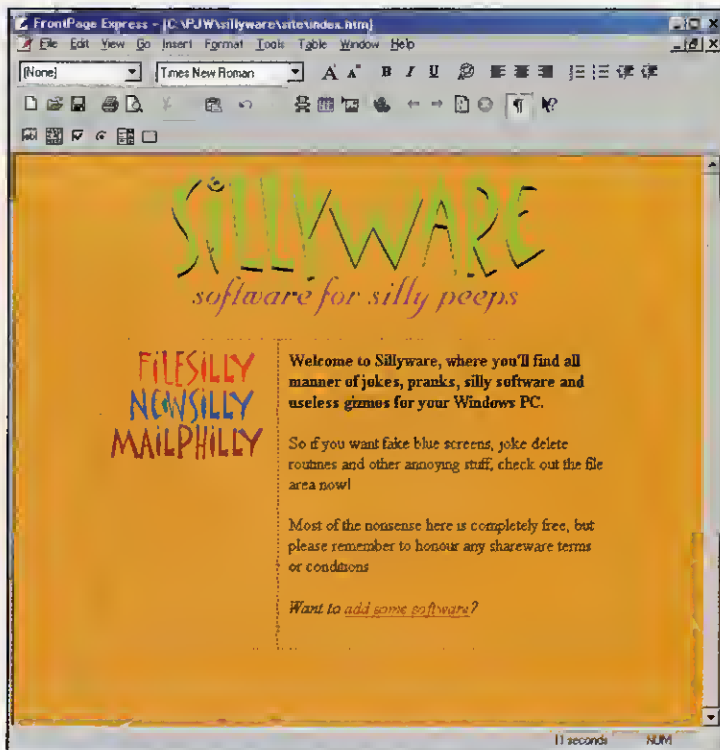


Fig 8: We've now lost the dead space around the buttons, and we've changed the alignment of various elements to make them sit together more comfortably. Wasn't difficult, was it?



October De Thirtieth



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The Phoenix has Landed

Maxi Gamer Phoenix™

Guillemot's Maxi Gamer Phoenix
brings the next generation
of graphics after Voodoo2™.
This Voodoo Banshee™ based
2D/3D card delivers world fastest
2D and scorching 3D.

Fire up your games and
business presentations
as never before.

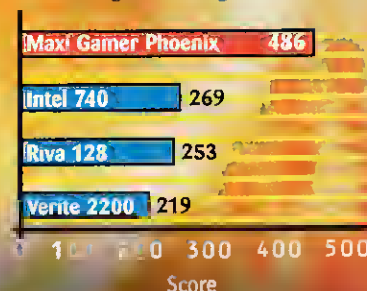
Experience the Power of
Phoenix.



Key features of the Maxi Gamer Phoenix

- ✓ Industry first 128-bit VGA, 100 MHz single-cycle Windows GUI Acceleration
- ✓ High-resolution : up to 1600X1200 in 32 bit with a vertical refresh rate of 120 Hz
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- ✓ Ultimate 3D experience with 100 Mpixels/sec, 100 Mtexels/sec & 1 Million triangles/sec.
- ✓ No-compromise 3D image quality at high frame rates with 16MB RAM on board.
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GameGauge-Blazing Performance



* Performance based on a PII-400 system, all components running at default factory settings. CGW, Voodoo Banshee's score is a single card score at 3Dfx Voodoo Banshee's score.

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WATCHDOG

The software industry can sometimes be a closed shop when it comes to punters and their complaints. Let **PC ZONE** ram-raid their premises for you and snatch some answers

★ ANSWERED BY Adam Phillips

DOH!

Feeling as undervalued as Homer Simpson? If you've got a consumer issue that needs addressing, drop us a line.

WRITE TO Watchdog, **PC ZONE**, Dennis Publishing, 19 Belsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

EMAIL us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject heading 'Watchdog'.

"I'm more than a little bit pissed off with the complete bollocks some so-called 'specialists' blurt out without having a clue"

MARTIN PORTER

CHIPSET CAPERS!

Q After hearing about 3D accelerator cards and how they vastly improve gameplay, I decided to invest in one. Now, not being the richest of chaps, I went for the cheaper Matrox M3D option, knowing that it wouldn't be as good as the more expensive models on the market.

I was very happy with the results on *Jedi Knight*, my most played game, as I now had smooth, full-screen graphics! But the euphoria soon wore off. After seeing your rave review of *Carmageddon* out on budget with its new 3D acceleration support, I went out and bought it.

However, I was very disappointed to find that my 3D card wasn't supported. I searched for patches on the Internet but to no avail. In the end I just accepted it as the consequence of buying

the cheaper 3D card and went on with my life.

That is until *Final Fantasy VII* came out. After reading your review stating "everybody should have this game", I had to get it. Of course, I was dubious about buying it because I wasn't sure if my 3D card would be supported, so I checked into it.

The kind staff at PC World allowed me to open the box and read the documentation before purchasing it. It stated that *FFVII* supported Direct3D and PowerVR Extreme chipsets as well as many others. That suited me, as my card was PowerVR, and I had run *Quake II* using the PowerVR Extreme option. So I bought it and went home to play my new game in glorious 3D graphics.

I installed the game and, to my horror, found that I couldn't select any of the 3D cards in the set-up

screen. I turned to Eidos' website. I was extremely miffed to find an FAQ stating: "The retail version of *FFVII* does not support boards based on PowerVR PCX-1 and PCX-2 chipsets." Unfortunately, my PowerVR card is a PCX-2. Then I read: "There are currently no plans to release patches for this title due to these Direct3D incompatibilities."

I have now been relegated to playing *FFVII* on software rendering mode and, to make it worse, I have to play in low-res because my computer is too slow – the hi-res mode is like running through a giant vat of golden syrup with heavy shopping bags.

Ultimately, I have a Matrox card which was supposed to offer 3D-accelerated gameplay, but, as I've discovered, it doesn't on certain games. Why is this? And why wasn't it clear that *FFVII*

didn't support my card before I bought the game?

Sam

A First off, Watchdog would like to point out that we never stated in our review that the budget version of *Carmageddon* included 3D acceleration support.

With regards to *FFVII*, we contacted the Matrox headquarters in Canada to see if they could shed some light on the packaging hiccup, and received a teletype reply from Jason Della Rocca, Matrox's Developer Relations Manager. He offered the following explanation: "The packaging situation arose due to the release schedule and the technical difficulties involved in supporting PowerVR – *FFVII* uses 8-bit palletized textures, which the PowerVR PCX 2 does not support. Either all four CDs worth of artwork would have to be converted to 16-bit, or a crazy amount of real-time texture conversions would have to be done which would make the game unplayable. Unfortunately, the initial green light given by the development team prompted the marketing team to include the PowerVR logo on the box... the logo should not have been there and it was too late to turn back because so many boxes were already printed."

To avoid future mishaps, he also pointed out that Matrox are putting together a 3D game catalogue that lists the games supported and any relevant patches. You can view it at www.matrox.com/mgaweb/gaming/3dgame.htm.

Watchdog also contacted Eidos for their take on the situation. Unfortunately, at the time of going to press, no comment was available. We will, however, be passing on your personal details to see if Eidos would be willing to recompense you for the packaging mistake that Matrox say was made – Watchdog believes some kind of goodwill gesture would be appropriate.



Final Fantasy VII: "Why isn't it clear that it doesn't support my PowerVR card?" asks Sam.



TA: Cavedog's 'experts' are talking bollocks, says Martin Porter.

TRUST ANNIHILATED

Q As a well-respected PC games magazine, how often are you forced to deal with technical advice specialists, only to find yourself talking to some donkey who'd be hard-pushed to remember the name of his employers?

I'm more than just a little bit pissed off with the complete and utter bollocks some of these so-called 'specialists' blurt out without having a clue, thus costing us, the games-buying public, extra money and time.

Without a doubt, the most annoying of such 'gurus' was kind enough to help me out with an enquiry I had about *Total Annihilation*. Before I bought it, I simply wanted to know if TA could be played over a LAN (or even just between two machines) with just one copy of the game.

I rang Cavedog (the game's developers) and was told: "Yes, it's like *Age Of Empires*, you can have as many as you like playing from just one copy." On buying it, I discovered that the guy was talking utter bollocks!

I wouldn't normally mind paying for a game as excellent as TA because of its single-player features, but I deliberately asked about LAN play so myself and my flatmate could play off one copy! When it comes to £35, it's just not on for the 'experts' to lie if they don't quite know.

If someone happened to record the conversation, couldn't the advisor be held responsible for their cock-up? They have a duty to the games-buying public to fully understand the products they're selling.

Martin Porter

A Your anger is justified. There is nothing worse than bad advice which, adding insult to injury, ends up costing you money. Fortunately, when the bods at GTI (distributors of

TA) were informed of your situation, they apologised for the mistake made by Cavedog and are sending you a second copy of the game so you can multiplayer with your flatmate. There you go.

TEMP FRUSTRATION

Q On reading about the excellent services that Wireplay offer, I decided to give it a try. I downloaded the latest Wireplay client software, double-clicked on the auto unzipping file (wire9543.exe)... but with little joy. Every time it tries to decompress the files, I get the error message: "The decompression of %s failed. There may not be enough free disk space available in the TEMP directory." Which is absolute crap because there is over a gig of free space.

I have FAT32 installed from Windows 95 osr2 and was wondering if this might have something to do with it. Is the software not detecting the free disk space because it tries to access the disk as if it were FAT16? I don't think it's the actual Wireplay software that's at fault, because I have tried to install it from your PCZ CD-ROM as well and I get the same error message.

Greg Shaw

A It's always difficult to offer advice without having the machine in front of us, but James Kaye at Wireplay reckons he's suffered from a similar problem. According to him, the most likely reason is because your PC may have two Temp files. One is the 'obvious' folder which is located in the root of your C drive, the other Temp folder is a sub-directory in your Windows folder. The latter is probably the one that is full of junk - make sure it's empty. Watchdog also recommends that you do a

Scan Disk to make sure there's no other crud clogging up your hard drive.

ACTIVISION ANGER

Q I never thought I would find a company that discourages customers from buying new hardware for their computers, but apparently that's what Activision do. Having bought a 3Dfx card and been amazed by the difference it made to the supported games - especially those provided with it, like *MechWarrior 2* - I jumped at the chance to sell it on at a good price and buy a Voodoo2 card.

With the increased performance came a price (apart from the hard cash): most of my existing games didn't work. After searching on the Internet, I stumbled upon homepages with more patches than you can shake a stick at. Almost all software companies have created Voodoo2 patches for their popular games - except for Activision.

Considering they had *MechWarrior 2* in the first 3Dfx bundle, and *Battlezone* in the subsequent Voodoo2 bundle - I thought that Activision, of all companies, would have the relevant Voodoo2 patch for upgrading *MechWarrior 2*.

But no. After writing to them, the best they could do was to tell me how to fool the game into thinking my Voodoo 2 card was a Voodoo 1. Surprise, surprise, that didn't work either.

What can I do? Wait for a programmer to write a patch in his spare time - lucky *Carmageddon* owners - or give up all hope?

Andrew Wingate

A Some bad news for you, unfortunately. Activision UK tell us that there is a new Voodoo2 version of *MW2* called *MW2: TITANIUM* which is available as a bundle (*MW2*, *Mercs* and *Ghost Bear*) or as a stand-alone. The problem is that it's only available in the US, and they are unsure whether the package will make it to the UK. They also told us that there are no plans to produce a specific patch for the older version of *MW2*.

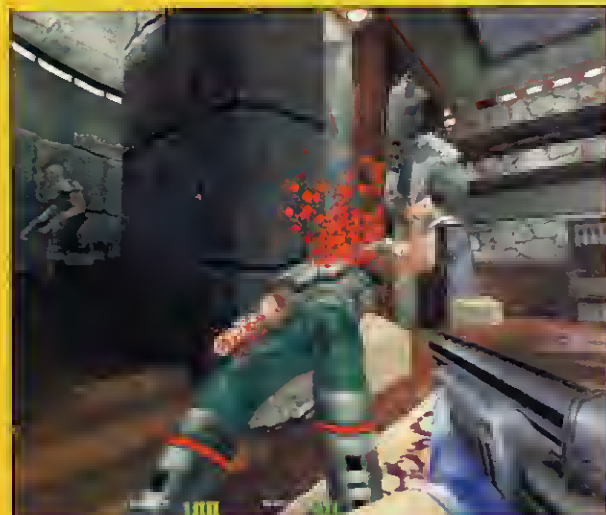
When asked for Activision's overall policy towards patches for second-generation graphics cards, Activision US were unable to provide a comment before PC ZONE went to press. We'll be printing their response in the next issue, out Wednesday 21 October.

PCZONE

Coming next month

READ THE FIRST REVIEW HERE

SiN (finally!)



Girls, guns and ultra-violence make it into next month's issue, as we bring you the world's first review of *SiN*

KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD DEMO

We'd hoped to bring you the *Klingon* demo this month, but due to problems at MicroProse in the US it's been a tad delayed. We've got our fingers (and everything else) firmly crossed for next issue

MAGIC & MAYHEM

You've seen the demo on this month's CD, next issue find out how the full game fares with our expert reviewers

BLOOD 2

It's blood and gore galore in this action test - catch the review

GRIM FANDANGO

With all the comings and goings at Virgin, *Grim Fandango* has had a tumultuous arrival. See what we think of the finished game next issue

HOWTO... BUILD YOUR OWN WEBSITE

Part two of our guide continues, showing you how to make more of the free Web space that comes with your ISP account

OBSESSED WITH STAR WARS

Discover one man's manic obsession with all things *Star Wars*

TIPS, CHEATS AND GUIDES

That's right, we've got tons more game tips, cheats and help, including everything you ever wanted to know about *Final Fantasy VII*, and a walkthrough of *HardWar*

MORE DEAR WAZZA

We've received so many letters in response to our Dear Wazza page that next issue we're giving Wazza even more space to sort you out

ON SALE

WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER

* Note: this is a guide only, content may change due to circumstances beyond our control

TOP 100

Welcome to the PC ZONE Top 100. Here you'll find the games that in our expert opinion are the current top PC games in their field, as well as a few extras you might like to consider if you're a big fan of the genre

ACTION GAMES



QUAKE II

PCZ #59 • 97%

⚡ The sequel to 'the most important PC game ever' turns out to be more than worth the wait. Despite the odd bit of slowdown, single-player and deathmatch games are in a league of their own. As Macca concluded in his review: "Quake II is pretty much perfect." Buy it now.
PUBLISHER Activision • 01895 456700



JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II

PCZ #55 • 94%

⚡ It's not Quake, but then it doesn't even try to be. But it is a compelling, technically superb blend of action and exploration neatly wrapped up in the Star Wars universe. Altogether most impressive.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/VE • 0171 368 2255



FADE TO BLACK

PCZ #31 • 94%

⚡ The unofficial sequel to the excellent Flashback, this is a near-perfect blend of third-person exploration and combat action. The technical precursor to the fantastic Tomb Raider, it's a classic in its own right.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING

PCZ #44 • 94%

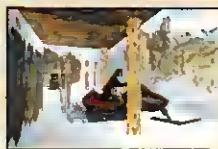
⚡ The ultimate mix of space combat, Elite-style trading and FMV action, Privateer 2 was the first big budget release from Origin which used live action in a positive way. Absolutely packed with stars, this is pukka stuff.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



TIE FIGHTER

PCZ #18 • 94%

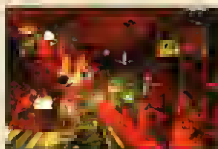
⚡ TIE Fighter is still rated by many as the finest space combat sim ever to be released. It succeeds because it successfully blends all the kudos of Star Wars with a wicked new engine for super-fast TIE on X-Wing fisticuffs.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/VE • 0171 368 2255



TOMB RAIDER II

PCZ #57 • 94%

⚡ The first game broke the mould, but the sequel even improves on the original. Tomb Raider II sports a curvier Lara, massive new levels to explore and a tidier control system. The game comes with native 3Dfx support and looks better than ever.
PUBLISHER Core/Eidos • 0181 636 3000



FORSAKEN

PCZ #63 • 94%

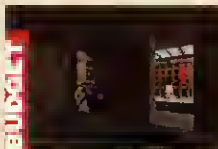
⚡ Descent is dead and Forsaken is now king of the tunnel-based shoot 'em ups. With huge, varied levels, heaps of graphical effects, weapons and a fantastic multiplayer LAN-based game, it's up there with the best of 'em.
PUBLISHER Acclaim • 0171 344 5000



KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD NEW ENTRY

PCZ #68 • 94%

⚡ At last, the Star Trek universe gets its first decent game. Not only that, but it's also a Quake clone, using the Unreal engine. And it's better than Unreal. And it's got Klingons in it, and everything.
PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893



DUKE NUKEM 3D

PCZ #40 • 93%

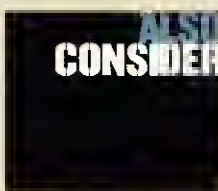
⚡ The debate rages on, and there are still a lot of people who rate Duke over Quake. It's not as technically impressive, but brags gameplay by the bucketload in one-player mode and when played over a network.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



INCOMING

PCZ #63 • 90%

⚡ Rage's awesome all-action arcade epic is quite possibly the best-looking action game we've seen this year. If you've got the hardware and want to get your hands on non-stop action and a dose of strategy, this is a must-buy.
PUBLISHER Rage • 0121 452 8400



UNREAL

GT Interactive • PCZ #65 • 93%

QUAKE Activision • PCZ #43 • 96% **BUDGET**

SPEC OPS: RANGERS ASSAULT Take 2 • PCZ #65 • 88%

JEDI KNIGHT: MYSTERIES OF THE SITH LucasArts • PCZ #62 • 95%

MDK Interplay • PCZ #50 • 90%

LAST BRONX Sega • PCZ #62 • 87%

MAGIC CARPET II Electronic Arts • PCZ #32 • 92% **BUDGET**

HEXEN II Activision • PCZ #54 • 94%

RACING GAMES

**CARMAGEDDON****PCZ #50 • 95%**

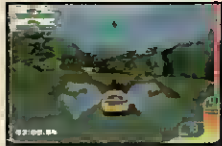
★ Awesome arcade-style racer that's heavy on the hit 'n' run and gameplay. Loads of different cars to choose from, plenty of tracks, three ways to play and a fab multiplayer network mode make this one of the most entertaining driving games ever.

PUBLISHER SCI • 0171 585 3308

**FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2****PCZ #36 • 95%**

★ The amazing sequel to the greatest F1 driving sim ever. Updated brilliantly for the 94/95 season with all-new detailed circuits, cars and teams. Will run on a 486DX2 but you'll need a Pentium to run the hi-res mode.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893

**COLIN MCRAE RALLY****PCZ #68 • 93%**

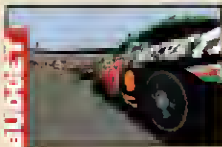
NEW ENTRY Sporting an updated TOCA engine, Colin McRae has become the new benchmark in rally simulations. With car customisability and a heap of multiplayer accessibility, this game should be top of everyone's rally games heap.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**F1 RACING SIMULATION****PCZ #59 • 93%**

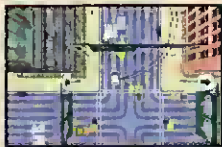
★ The sheer depth of realism is what makes *F1 Racing Sim* such an outstanding experience to play. Not only that, but it looks an absolute treat too – especially 3Dfx-ed up. Ubi Soft practically sprung up from nowhere and took the lead from the established names in the genre.

PUBLISHER Ubi Soft • 0181 944 9000

**NASCAR RACING 2****PCZ #46 • 92%**

★ A worthy upgrade featuring a new, smoother 3D engine, improved opponent AI, more controllable cars, a simple single-screen car set-up and a multiplayer network option. The constant stream of headset messages adds atmosphere. A racing sim fan's must.

PUBLISHER Sierra • 0118 920 9100

**GRAND THEFT AUTO****PCZ #58 • 92%**

★ This is the game that took over from *Carmageddon* as the media's favourite pet hate. Steal cars, dodge police, mow down pedestrians and cause mayhem in city streets in one of the most addictive driving games ever. *Micro Machines* on acid.

PUBLISHER BMG • 0171 973 0011

**F197****PCZ #62 • 92%**

★ The long-awaited sequel to the excellent PlayStation conversion proved to be worth the wait, with improved driver AI, lush graphics, a split-screen mode and more ludicrous commentary from Murray Walker. Fantastic.

PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000

**MOTOCROSS MADNESS****PCZ #67 • 91%**

★ An astoundingly addictive game. Loads of game and race options and tremendous fun, especially when played with a Microsoft Freestyle Pro pad over a network. Soon available with the pad for around 50 quid. A must-buy.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000

**MICRO MACHINES 3****PCZ #64 • 90%**

★ The manic miniature racing game gets the 3D treatment and loses nothing along the way. The new power-ups might not please the purist, but *Micro Machines 3* is still one of the finest two-player games around.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**MOTORHEAD****PCZ #63 • 90%**

★ With drop-dead graphics and a blistering frame rate, this is a ridiculously fast, fab-looking, intense racing experience. Add a great LAN-based option (Local Area Network) and *Motorhead* is the ace of arcade racers.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601

CONSIDER

INDYCAR 2 Candant • PCZ #34 • 90% **BUDGET**

SCREAMER 2 Virgin • PCZ #45 • 93% **BUDGET**

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 Psygnosis • PCZ #46 • 86% **BUDGET**

INTERSTATE 76: NITRO RIDERS Activision • PCZ #63 • 87%

TOCA: TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP Europress • PCZ #59 • 86%

ULTIMATE RACE PRO MicroProse • PCZ #62 • 88%

SPORTS GAMES

**LINKS LS****PCZ #43 • 94%**

★ The classic golf sim gets an update, and unsurprisingly it's fab. There's more options, luscious graphics, a redesigned menu and a view selection system. There's even a built-in upgrader for all the old data disk courses you splashed out on.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000

**NHL 98****PCZ #57 • 94%**

★ Another year, another *NHL*, but this one isn't just the best ice hockey game, it's one of the best sports games we've ever seen. Super 3Dfx-ed graphics, fantastic animation and awesome presentation make this a sports title not to be missed.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**PGA TOUR PRO****PCZ #55 • 94%**

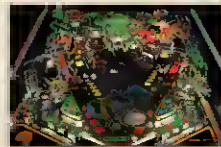
★ Nothing really distinguishes this version from the last, except for the brilliant and very easy to use Internet play facility. Waste no time, go and thwack some Americans right now. Remember: your country needs you.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS 97****PCZ #53 • 92%**

★ This game doesn't quite better *Super Tennis* on the SNES, but it's as close as you'll get on the PC. The simple control system means it's instantly playable, but we may as well tell you now that the women's skirts still don't fly up when they serve.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK!****PCZ #53 • 91%**

★ Remember *Pro Pinball: The Web*? This, the second table in the series, is better in every way. Improved ball dynamics, detail and sound effects, and of course there's the return of the world's dirtiest computer game voice telling you to "Lock those balls".

PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337

**WORLD CUP 98****PCZ #65 • 91%**

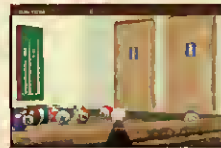
★ The best football game available for the PC. Graphics and detail to die for, a creative control system that allows for awesome moves and goals, extremely competent AI and excellent presentation make this a must-have, even though it lacks a custom tournament mode.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**NBA LIVE 98****PCZ #60 • 90%**

★ With even better graphics and commentary than before, it's one of the best-looking PC sports games. This version sports 'realistic' faces and players of different heights – it's by far the best basketball game available.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**VIRTUAL POOL 2****PCZ #58 • 90%**

★ Okay, so *Virtual Pool 2* scored one per cent less than its predecessor, but this follow-up beats it hands down. 3Dfx support goes some way to pushing the series further, and the inclusion of English Pub rules make it a more essential purchase than before.

PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666

**ACTUA SOCCER 2****PCZ #59 • 90%**

★ Instantly accessible footie action in this latest instalment of Gremlin's high profile *Actua* series. Great graphics, easy control and a hidden Super Furry Animals team confirm *Actua 2*'s 'must have' status.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601

**THE GOLF PRO****PCZ #62 • 90%**

★ If you're bored with either *PGA* or *Links*, then this is the best of the 'mouse-swing' bunch. Good course design and some excellent tuition means there's loads of gameplay, though the putting lets it down a tad.

PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337

CONSIDER

★ There's always a swell of different sports game types depending on the current sporting season. These are worth having a look at...

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL Virgin Interactive • PCZ #68 • 88%

MADDER HFL 98 EA Sports • PCZ #59 • 87%

TRIPLE PLAY 99 Electronic Arts • PCZ #64 • 90%

TROPHY BASS 2 Candant • PCZ #50 • 84%

ADVENTURE GAMES

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES



ALONE IN THE DARK 3

PCZ #21 • 95%

★ Better than the previous *AITD* instalments, *Alone 3* is a tense, ambient tale of Navajo Indian magic and reincarnation that unfolds in the usual *AITD* manner. This is now available as part of a compilation budget pack.

PUBLISHER Infogrames • 0181 738 8199



BIOFORGE

PCZ #25 • 95%

★ Futuristic *Alone In The Dark*-style game with impressive graphics, puzzles and soundtrack. Often preferred over *AITD* games as its unique blend of arcade combat is explosive. The only drag is EA's refusal to make a sequel for it.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



SYSTEM SHOCK

PCZ #20 • 95%

★ This futuristic first-person cyberpunk adventure from the makers of *Ultima* was initially overlooked by many people. Now available on budget, this is a must-buy for those new to the genre. The graphics might be a little dated, but the atmosphere is still invigorating.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

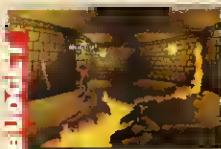


DISCWORLD II

PCZ #44 • 93%

★ Perfect Entertainment's immaculate sequel to *Discworld* follows would-be wizard Rincewind in his search for the Grim Reaper. Not as hard as the first game, but bigger and better looking. *Discworld II* is a universally appealing adventure game.

PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000



INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

PCZ #37 • 93%

★ Follow a post-*Raiders* Indy in his search for the submerged metropolis. Three ways to play make for a high replayability factor, and the inter-character banter is brilliant.

PUBLISHER LucasArts/VIE • 0171 368 2255



LBA 2: TWINEN'S ODYSSEY

PCZ #54 • 93%

★ Twinen is back – this time to thwart those pesky Esmers in this sumptuous sequel. The huge play area in *LBA 2*, coupled with seamlessly linked puzzles, creates a great-looking and hugely atmospheric adventure. A must for adventure fans.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



SAM & MAX

PCZ #11 • 93%

★ The hilarious dog/rabbit duo's first and only PC outing, in which they need to solve a host of bizarre puzzles. An all-talkie adventure with a gag-laden script, this is an essential budget-priced purchase even if you're not a point-and-click fan.

PUBLISHER LucasArts/VIE • 0171 368 2255



THE CURSE OF MONKEY ISLAND

PCZ #58 • 92%

★ The third game in LucasArts' classic *Monkey* saga delivers the goods big-time, much to the relief of adventure fans everywhere. *The Curse Of Monkey Island* is the new benchmark for point-and-click adventure games.

PUBLISHER VIE • 0171 368 2255



STARSHIP TITANIC

PCZ #63 • 91%

★ Douglas Adams' epic adventure is an innovative piece of software filled with everything that's right about adventure games. With its lush visuals and an innovative user interface, *Starship Titanic* is a must-buy for adventure fans.

PUBLISHER Zblac Entertainment • 01626 332233

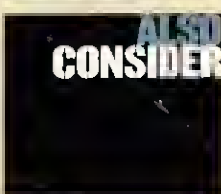


ECSTATICA II

PCZ #48 • 91%

★ We dubbed it "an adventure with balls". It's hard, but it's one of the most rewarding adventures we've ever seen. It constantly surprises and is sure to keep even the most battle-weary adventure fan busy for weeks.

PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000



FULL THROTTLE Virgin • PCZ #27 • 92% **BUDGET**

THE PANDORA DIRECTIVE Virgin • PCZ #43 • 92%

TOONSTRUCK Virgin • PCZ #45 • 93% **BUDGET**

GABRIEL KNIGHT 2: THE BEAST WITHIN Candant • PCZ #36 • 88%

LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE Electronic Arts • PCZ #21 • 93% **BUDGET**



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: LABYRINTH IIF WORLOS

PCZ #1 • 94%

★ This improves on almost every aspect of its prequel, *The Stygian Abyss*. You explore a complex, ever-evolving dungeon; it has unsurpassed atmosphere and interaction.

PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



FINAL FANTASY VII

PCZ #66 • 93%

★ Fearsomely addictive gem of a game of truly epic proportions. Great graphics, plenty of hidden surprises and massive levels will keep you totally absorbed if you forgive the risible dialogue and turn-based combat.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



REALMS OF THE HAUNTING

PCZ #47 • 93%

★ Although overlooked by many fans of the genre, our Mallo gave it a whopping 93 per cent when he reviewed it back in issue 47. Still well worth a look if you happen to see it going cheap, *ROTH* is a well cool mix of adventure and RPG.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601



LANDS OF LORE: GUARDIANS IIF DESTINY

PCZ #56 • 92%

★ Four long years in the making, Westwood Studios' mammoth new adventure proved more than worth the wait. Sumptuous visuals and a tremendous atmosphere combine to make it an instant classic.

PUBLISHER VIE • 0171 368 2255



FALLOUT

PCZ #61 • 91%

★ This surprised everyone in the office, proving to be both addictive and well conceived. Give it a chance and you'll discover that *Fallout* is a rewarding RPG which'll keep you entertained for hours. Not quite on a par with the mighty *Ultima* series, but then what is?

PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666

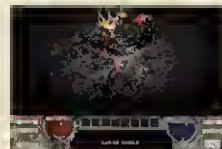


ULTIMA VII

PCZ #3 • 89%

★ Arguably the best of all the *Ultima* games, *Ultima VII* blends character interaction and the exploration of the world of Britannia. The last *Ultima* series to give complete party control. Check out the *Ultima Collection* for a real treat.

PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442

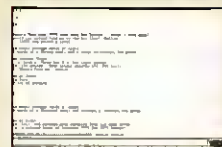


DIABLO

PCZ #48 • 88%

★ Standard hack 'n' slash fare, but pulled off with such style that it's addictive. A great storyline compensates for repetitive arcade combat and supremely detailed animation makes it a superb coffee-table game.

PUBLISHER Zblac/Blizzard • 01626 332233

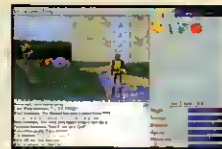


TERRIS

PCZ #44 • 88%

★ A MUD in the old-school style of text-based RPGs, but it's so addictive that we're still playing it. The various quests, puzzles and monsters will keep you going for days. The gameplay is excellent, if you can handle the 'texty-ness'.

PUBLISHER AOL • 0800 279 7444



MERIDIAN 59

PCZ #45 • 86%

★ This ground-breaking on-line RPG enables thousands of people to interact with each other in the same fantasy universe at the same time. Garish and horrible graphics aside, *Meridian 59* remains one of the best online multiplayer RPGs around.

PUBLISHER 3DO Company • 0181 296 1949

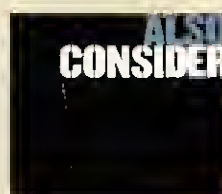


ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: THE STYGIAN ABYSS

PRE-PC ZONE

★ This took role-playing games away from first-person tile-based RPGs. Amazing architecture, witty characterisations, layers of storyline and the best ending of any game in history.

PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



★ These are the cream of the crop, largely because RPGs have taken a back seat to other game types over the last couple of years. However, also bear in mind...

DIABLO: HELLFIRE Candant • PCZ #59 • 82%

ULTIMA COLLECTION Electronic Arts • PCZ #62 • 90%

RAVENLOFT: STONE PROPHET Mindscape • PCZ #25 • 78%

STRATEGY GAMES**OLINGON KEEPER** PCZ #53 • 96%

★ A game with a genre almost impossible to define, *DK* takes *SimCity 2000*, *C&C* and *Ultima Underworld* and remoulds them into one hell of a title. Fantastic gameplay, and a lifespan on a par with the Queen Mother.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

**SYNDICATE WARS** PCZ #43 • 95%

★ One of the best strategy games of all time gets a sequel, and what a fabulous sequel it is too. *Syndicate Wars* houses a wealth of intricate levels, gorgeous graphics and enough gratuitous violence to keep anyone happy.

PUBLISHER EA/Bullfrog • 01753 549442

**X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE** PCZ #52 • 95%

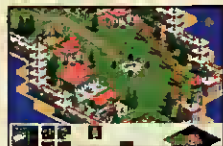
★ A revamped engine and a healthy helping of real-time combat have brought the fantastically addictive *X-COM* series bang up to date. If you like your strategy games deep and meaningful, you should buy *X-COM 3* immediately. It'll keep you busy for weeks.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893

**PUZZLE BOBBLE** PCZ #50 • 94%

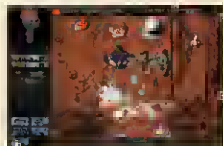
★ We can't agree exactly where *Puzzle Bobble* fits – should it go in here, with the *Civs* and *Sims* of the PC gaming world, or in the Action section? But it most certainly deserves to be in our Top 100 section. Totally absorbing and addictive puzzle game.

PUBLISHER GT Interactive • 0171 258 3791

**AGE OF EMPIRES** PCZ #54 • 94%

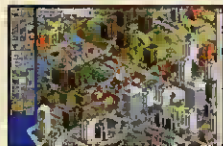
★ Imagine *Civilization* if its great empire-building gameplay improved with some excellent graphical touches and comprehensive multi and single-player options (all in real time). That's *Age Of Empires* in a nutshell.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000

**TOTAL ANNIHILATION** PCZ #56 • 92%

NEWENTRY ★ With a ridiculous number of units and its fast-paced action, *TA* is without doubt one of the best real-time strategy games ever. The polygon units are smooth, and multiplayer games are awesome. Pisses on *Red Alert*.

PUBLISHER GT Interactive • 0171 258 3791

**SIMCITY 2000** PCZ #13 • 92%

★ A classic that deserves its reputation as one of the all-time greats in the strategy world. Build and maintain the city of your dreams and cope with all the problems a real-life Mayor would come up against. It's a lot more fun than it sounds, trust us.

PUBLISHER Maxis • 0171 505 1500

**THE SENTINEL RETURNS** PCZ #66 • 90%

★ Twelve years on, the sequel to the 'classic' Amstrad and BBC Micro strategy-fest makes a welcome return. Some may find the gameplay a tad too repetitive, but it's compelling and runs happily on a P133.

PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000

**CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 97/98** PCZ #57 • 90%

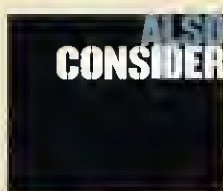
★ The best football management game ever gets its seasonal update and a few added extras – you can now play a number of leagues simultaneously, and edit the existing stats.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000

**CIVILIZATION II** PCZ #36 • 90%

★ Explore the world, conquer territories and research new technologies in one of the most successful strategy games ever. It's not that different to the first one, but it merits a '90s update and a place here.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893



WARLORDS III: DARKLORDS RISING Broderbund • PCZ #67 • 90%

OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR VOL 1 Empire • PCZ #68 • 92%

COMMANDOS Eidos Interactive • PCZ #66 • 87%

INCUBATION Blue Byte • PCZ #56 • 94%

MASTER OF ORION 2 MicroProse • PCZ #45 • 92% **BUDGET**

COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT EA • PCZ #47 • 94%

SETTLERS 2 Blue Byte • PCZ #41 • 92%

T1 TANK PLATOON II MicroProse • PCZ #63 • 90%

FLIGHT SIMULATION GAMES**F-22 TOTAL AIR WAR** PCZ #68 • 95%

NEWENTRY ★ This full-price new version of DID's masterpiece is perhaps a bit of a rip-off for owners of *F-22 ADF*, but anyone looking to buy one of the greatest combat sims of recent years should seriously consider this one.

PUBLISHER Ocean/DID • 0161 832 6633

**FLIGHT SIM 98** PCZ #55 • 94%

★ Another year, and yet another flight sim to come from the mighty Microsoft. However, this time, with two new aircraft, a helicopter, hundreds of new airports and hugely impressive 3D acceleration, it's really worth having.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000

**TEAM APACHE** PCZ #65 • 93%

★ A highly accessible and detailed chopper combat sim that lets you get on with the fun stuff rather than struggling with systems and an over-complex flight model. A bit vacuous for die-hard prop-heads, but as flight sims go this is one of the most fun to play.

PUBLISHER Mindscape • 01444 246333

**LONGBOW 2** PCZ #59 • 92%

★ "Longbow 2 is challenging, beautiful, exciting and fun – if you're 3Dfx'd up," we said in our review. If you don't have any extra graphics hardware, there's only one thing to do – think 'upgrade', 'upgrade' and 'upgrade'. It'll be worth the investment.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

**JANE'S F-15** PCZ #64 • 92%

★ A hard-core propeller-head's sim that can stand alongside the awesome *Longbow 2* as one of the most realistic flight sims available. Newbies to the genre might find it a bit overwhelming, but it's worth persevering with.

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

**US MARINE FIGHTERS** PCZ #30 • 92%

★ Lovely graphics and a realistic enough flight model. This was originally released as a mission disk for *US Navy Fighters*, but it now comes as part of the *US Navy Fighters Gold* pack, so make sure you go get that instead!

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

**FLYING CORPS GOLD** PCZ #59 • 92%

★ Action-packed WWI flight simulation with neat graphics. Some of you may recall *Red Baron* as one of the greatest WW1 flight sims ever – this improves on the old classic to become the best PC WW1 sim currently available.

PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337

**JETFIGHTER III** PCZ #47 • 91%

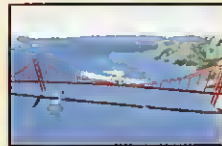
★ The follow-up to one of the most popular sims ever. Fly over three and a half million square miles of accurately-mapped terrain of South America. It really is just like being there. Oh yeah, you get to shoot things too, but sadly there's no duty free option.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000

**A-10 CUDAL!** PCZ #59 • 90%

★ Functional graphics for a game that really does capture the imagination, mainly because the plane is an absolute joy to fly. Although it's slightly limited due to a lack of a fully-fledged campaign it's still great fun, as well as being pretty speedy on a modest Pentium.

PUBLISHER Activision • 01895 456700

**FLIGHT UNLIMITED II** PCZ #60 • 84%

★ It can't really compete with the behemoth that is *Flight Sim 98*, and as a result is somewhat limited and claustrophobic. However, it does score highly for being more detailed in its smaller area, and much more fun.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000

★ If a flight sim is good, you can bet it'll stay on the shelves for a long time – hence our recommendation for *US Marine Fighters*. Some of the more recent releases worth considering include...

AIR WARRIOR III Interactive Magic • PCZ #62 • 80%

COMANCHE 3 NovaLogic • PCZ #51 • 92%

COMANCHE GOLD NovaLogic • PCZ #65 • 87%

F/A-1B KOREA Empire Interactive • PCZ #61 • 90%

CONSIDER

ON THE CD

Don't sit there gawking at it, chuck the bloody thing in your CD drive and come back here when you get lost

★ WORDS Richie Shoemaker DISKMEISTER Daniel Emery

HELP!

CD trouble? Floppy disks playing up? Don't worry – phone our helpline and sort yourself out, pronto!

CD-ROM HELP Phone ABT on 01708 250250 or pczone@abt-net.demon.co.uk Any weekday between 9:30am and 5pm, and Saturday from 10am to 2pm. (Please do not phone the PC ZONE office as we're too busy putting the mag together to answer your calls.)

HD DISK HELP Phone Matthew on 01274 736990 Any weekday between 9am and 4pm.

BEFORE YOU DIAL... If you are calling either helpline, then please take note of the following points:

- ★ If possible, have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- ★ If this is not possible, note down all relevant information – ie system type, sound card, RAM etc – plus the nature of the fault.
- ★ Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.

NO CD?

If you don't have the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclose your HDs from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to:

CD Exchange (69), PC ZONE, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 0BQ

YOUR DETAILS (print clearly)

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Please make cheques payable to: DENNIS PUBLISHING LTD.

★ CDs from previous issues are also available – call 01789 490213.



DEMOS + SHAREWARE

MINIMUM SPECIFICATION

- ★ You'll need at least a Pentium 133 with 16Mb RAM to run the software on this month's CD-ROM.
- ★ Many of the programs on our cover CD-ROM are designed to run under Windows 95 and, as a result, some of them may require a Pentium 166 with 32Mb RAM to run satisfactorily. Please note that some games also require a 30 accelerator card to run.
- ★ Use the browser and menu system to see which demos are Windows 95, OOS and 30 accelerator only.



MOTOCROSS MADNESS

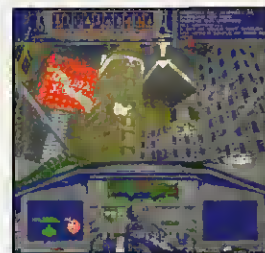
Microsoft

Now you can see what all the fuss was about with this one-level demo of the highly amusing and graphically splendid falling-off-your-bike simulator. You'll need a 3D card though. Key controls are also tricky, so you'd best get your gamepad out.

Controls: Keyboard/Joystick



No one ever said this was going to be easy.



ADRENIX

Funsoft

Take an exciting word like adrenaline, stick an 'x' on the end and schlap it round a well-worn genre like the *Descent* series and what do you get? A tiring clone with a name to match, that's what.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard/
joystick

HOME/W Accelerate

END/S Back

LEFT/RIGHT Guess

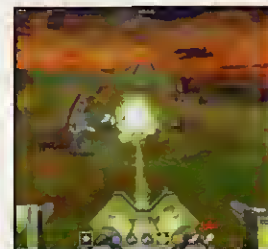
ALT Strafe

A/D Strafe left/right

Q/Right CONTROL Fire

SPACE/INSERT Fire missile

SHIFT Precise action



RECOIL

Virgin Interactive

Playing not unlike a *MechWarrior*-style game, this action-oriented tank shooter sees you in control of a futuristic and wholly unrealistic weapons platform. Kinda fun if you're in a destroy-everything mode – as long as you don't mind oversteering all over the place.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard/
joystick

CURSORS Movement/steer guided
missiles

MOUSE Targeting

LMB Fire pulse gun

RMB Fire advanced weapon/
switch missile view

1 Select pulse weapon

2-9 Select advanced weapon

SPACE Detonate remote mines

F1 Track mode

F2 Amphib mode

F3 Hover mode

F4 Sub mode

A/Z Surface/diver (sub mode)

C Centre turret with
chassis

BACKSPACE Centre chassis with
turret

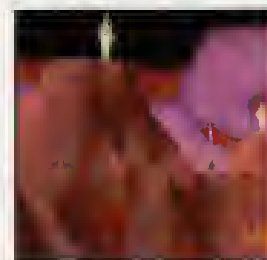
B Unlock turret movement
restrictions

CONTROL+B Toggle on/off cursor
steering feature

V Toggle first/third-person
views

G Overhead view

M Map



THE SENTINEL RETURNS

Psygnosis

Haunting, bizarre and addictive, this puzzle game should keep you up well into the wee small hours of the morning – once you've worked out what to do, that is.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

CURSORS/MOUSE Directional
control

LMB/A Absorb

RMB Mouse lock

H Hyperspace

U U-turn

P Pause



KNIGHTS & MERCHANTS

Interactive Magic

Looking like it might just give the forthcoming *Settlers III* (see preview on page 68) a run for it's money, *Knight & Merchants* is a real-time strategy game based in and around 1200AD Europe. Direct peasants to gather resources, trade and wage war, all in the name of your merciful King.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

- 1-4 Direct menu selections (construction, distribution, overview, settings)

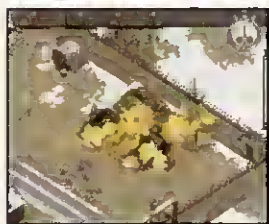
SPACE/ESC Cancel command/menu

S Dispatch soldiers

N Halt soldiers

A Attack

V Arrange soldiers into groups



COMMANDOS: BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Eidos

New version of the tactical WWI strategy game that's been quivering around the upper echelons of the PC games chart for the last couple of months.

Now's the time to find out why.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

MOUSE/CURSORS Select & direct/pan map view

1-9 Select unit

+/- Zoom in/out

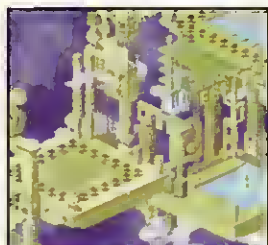


DOMINION: STORM OVER GIFT 3

Eidos

This, the first game from Ion Storm, was a bitter disappointment when we reviewed it in Issue #67 (43%). But then when everyone goes around nicking other people's ideas, something's got to give eventually. The beginning of the end for the C&C clone? Perhaps.

Controls: Mouse



LODE RUNNER 2

GT Interactive

Of all the old 80s games currently making a 90s return, this one perhaps remains closest to its roots. Now in isometric 3D, the aim is simply to stumble through five levels of old-school puzzle-solving.

Controls: Keyboard/gamepad

NumPad 7 Run northwest

NumPad 9 Run northeast

NumPad 1 Run southwest

NumPad 3 Run southeast

SHIFT Drop from/hand over hand bar

NumPad . Drop bomb

X Suicide (in case you get trapped)

ALT+V Skip to the next level

ALT+CURSORS Scroll around the level

ESC Quit



WING COMMANDER: SECRET OPS

Origin

Tucked away in the Editorial folder on the disc is the first instalment of the stand-alone mission pack for *Wing Commander Prophecy*. You don't need the original game to play it, but you'll need deep pockets if you're thinking of downloading it. Which is why we've saved you the trouble. You'll need to register online to play the game (www.secretops.com), and if you want full documentation you'll have to download that as well.

Controls: Joystick/mouse/keyboard

CURSORS Turn and pitch

+/- Increase/decrease throttle

**** Full speed

BACKSPACE Full stop

TAB Afterburner

- Afterburner toggle

Q/W Roll left/right

N Display current NAV toggle (in combat)

A Autopilot

CONTROL+E Eject

ESC Options menu

ALT+X Exit game

PAUSE Pause (in flight only)

SPACE Fire guns

ENTER Fire missiles

M Cycle missiles

F Select "Full Guns"

G Cycle through available guns

CONTROL+G Sync guns

I Target under reticule

CONTROL+T Smart targeting

U Target nearest enemy

L Lock target

Y Match target speed

R Target next component (capital ships only)

T Cycle targets (SHIFT cycles backwards)

E Drop decoy

CONTROL+O View mission objectives

CONTROL+M View message log

C Communications VDU (press 1-6 to send message)

S Adjust shields

O Damage VDU

P Power VDU (hold and adjust settings with pointer)

CONTROL+N Enter NAV map

F1/F4 Front/rear view

[/] Zoom in/out on current object

F2/F3 Left/right view

F5 Chase camera

F6 Object camera (cycle)

F7 Ship POV camera (cycle)

F8 Missile camera toggle

F9 Victim camera toggle

F10 Fly-by camera (again resets)

F11 Drop camera (again resets)

F12 Target track camera (cycle)

CONTROL+F8 Missile cam VDU

CONTROL+F4 Rear cam VDU

SHIFT Rotate camera around current object

Wingmen commands:

ALT+A Attack my target

ALT+O Request status

ALT+B Break and attack

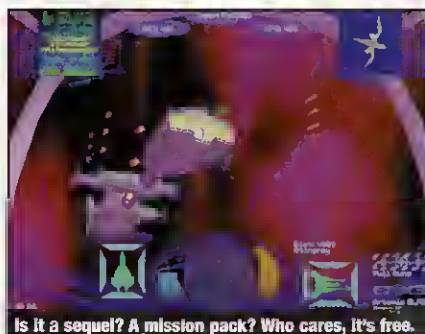
ALT+T Taunt target

ALT+F Form on my wing

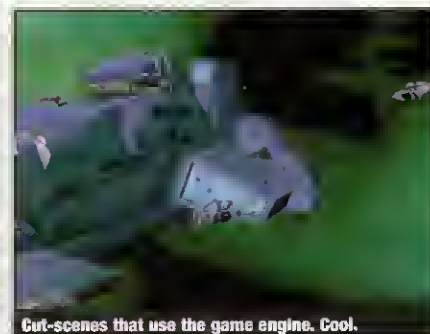
ALT+M Maintain radio silence

ALT+H Help me out

ALT+L Lift radio silence



Is it a sequel? A mission pack? Who cares, it's free.



Cut-scenes that use the game engine. Cool.





MAGIC & MAYHEM

Virgin Interactive

It's pointy-hat shenanigans again, courtesy of X-COM creators Mythos games. This tutorial mission should give you a taste for next month's review, as well as some ideas on how you can successfully blend bizarre and arcane ingredients to bend people to your will.

(C&C-style)

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

F11 Toggle scanner

F12 Toggle spell selection bar and wizard icon

H Automatically selects wizard; pressing it twice centres display on the wizard

T Track selected unit

P Pause game

SPACE Toggle creature select mode and spell mode

PG UP/DOWN Add/remove layers to roof removal system

</> Rotate map

Z/X Select previous/next friendly creature

[/] Decrease/increase size of the screen

CTRL+0-9 Team creation

0-9 Selects a team

ALT+0-9 Select team and centre view

HOME Centre the screen on selected unit

TAB Toggle pop-up open/closed

ESC Displays battle mini menu



OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR, vol. 1 Empire

A seriously serious turn-based strategy game featuring hexes and coffee breath. One scenario is included in the demo, but after reading the instructions that accompany the game files you'll probably still be at it next month.

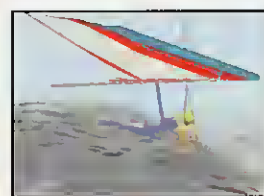
Controls: Mouse



WETRIX Ocean

Think Tetris in an isometric and very wet landscape, and you have a pretty good idea what Wetrix is all about: control falling blocks of land to stop the water falling over the side. Make sure you read the help file for further details.

Controls: Mouse



HANG SIM

Virtual Pilot

It may be exciting to climb inside a sleeping bag and hurl yourself off a cliff, but as those of us more interested in pursuing a more sedate thrill will testify, it's a lot sater to simulate the experience on a PC. Mind you, without the tear of God to keep you alive there's a good chance that this could be a bit, well, dull.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

F12 Panning toggle

Mouse + LMB pitch and roll

Mouse + RMB virtual cockpit control

SPACE Running toggle

A Thermal autopilot

CURSORS Engine controls

PG UP/DOWN Increase/decrease time

F4/F5 Increase/decrease simulation rate

F11 Reset rate

F1 Pilot view

F2 Chase view

F5 Track view

F6 HUD view cycle

HOME/END Increase/decrease visibility

INSERT/DELETE Increase/decrease

field of view

F11 Reset view

W Query wind

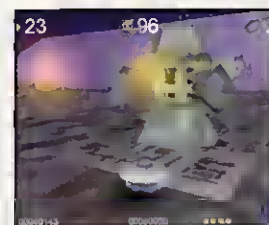
(interesting concept)

F8/F9 Increase/decrease

ground resolution

BACKSPACE Store launch site

TAB Recall launch site



THE RACE TO GALAMAX

Mind Mechanics

It's not a racing game, and you control a flying saucer that doesn't fly. Intrigued? Well, climb aboard and zip about, shooting anything that doesn't look like a hillock.

Controls: Joystick/keyboard

CURSORS Rotate ship, accelerate & brake

CONTROL Fire laser

ALT Fire special weapon

Z Drop anchor

Q/W Strafe left/right

F12 Pause game

PG UP/DOWN Increase/decrease brightness

HOME Reset brightness of game

ALT+F4 Quit game



PATCHES

Get more out of the games you already own. We've raided the Net and harangued the games publishers to bring you all the latest and finest patches

JEON KNIGHT

Having problems running the game through your PowerVR card? Maybe this will sort it out for you.

FREESPACE - THE GREAT WAR

The numerically lengthy 1.03.01 patch fixes the read-only .exe file.

DOMINION: STORM OVER GIFT 3

Patch one for Ion Storm's real-time strategy game fixes a whole heap of things. The score stays at 43% though.

OUNGEON KEEPER

Use this if you get the error 'Unable to Initialise' when running an IPX/Windows 98 game.

EA SPORTS CRICKET '96

Updates all the players from all the countries with their proper ratings.

EMPEROR OF THE FADING SUN

Two separate patches that should improve the balance of play.

FINAL FANTASY VII

Fixes the problem some have had with the

Riva 128 and Riva 128 ZX video cards.

GALACTIC CIVILIZATIONS

Two patches to enhance various aspects of gameplay, one for the Gold Edition.

INTERNATIONAL CRICKET CAPTAIN

Four-day matches should have 150 as a follow-on total, not 200 (cricket fans will know what that means).

LONGBOW GOLD

Now you can play this ageing chopper sim with all the glories that 3Dfx support brings.

LONGBOW II

The 2.09 patch addresses a few problems associated with earlier versions.

MECHCOMMANDER

This version (v1.8) addresses problems with Internet Gaming Zone and Internet play with UK versions.

MEDIEVAL

Now at version 1.03, this patch adds calltrops indication to terrain display line, and a victory indicator.

MEGATRAVELLER 1

Version 3 Patch 0.01. Corrects certain inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the weapon database.

PANDEMONIUM

Addresses problems found in a few Cyrix PCs.

QUAKE II CTF

Beta 1.09 version of the latest Capture The Flag modification for deathmatch play.

BURNOUT: CHAMPIONSHIP DRAG RACING

Version 1.23 updates the network version, and fixes problems with mplayer.com and engine set-up.

SOLDIERS AT WAR

The Bridge over the Rhine mission now ends after removing charges. Patch v1.1.

SPEC OPS

Version 1.3 - now with stealth mode, improved enemy AI and improved mouse controls. US version.

STRATOSPHERE

Fixes bug in Level 23 where some units were invulnerable.

TOTAL ANNIHILATION

Two patches: one a universal upgrade to v3.1, and another for owners of non-Intel

chips.

TOTAL SOCCER

Adds player injuries, Golden Goal rule and scanner on/off F2 option.

WAR IN RUSSIA

QB3 patch adds minor changes to aircraft icons and minule changes to German resource

Z

Fixes problems encountered when running the game under Windows 98.

PLUS:

Third-party add-ons for Medieval and various versions of EA's NBA games. Tucked away at the bottom you'll also find a combination file that upgrades Quake II to version 3.17 and includes the latest version of Capture The Flag.

CARMAGEDDON

A ton of stuff for the original Carmageddon should keep you going until the sequel arrives. You'll find blood patches, 3D card patches and editors galore. Make sure you read the accompanying readme files to ensure smooth running - over pedestrians.



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this month we upgrade our standard service without upping our price . for the some tiddly tenner o month , we triple your amount of free webspace to 15mb , (enough for 4000 pages of text) , and give you on unlimited number of email addresses and responsive games servers , plus extras ot stupid prices : LineOne™ content ot £3.20 o month after 3 months' free trial and our unique fox to email service for o one-off payment of £19.99 . just coll 0800 458 9666 or scribble your nome and address anywhere on this od , tear it out and send it to us ot freepost demon . we'll send you our free 30-doy trial cd and brochure . hos anyone ever offered you so much for so little before ?



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COLIN MCRAE RALLY

Codemasters

There may be plenty of games where you get to drive through muddy fields in a manner appropriate only to someone avoiding the law, but there aren't many that are this good. *Colin McRae* is without a doubt the best rally sim around at the moment.

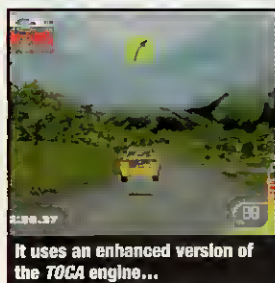
Controls: Keyboard/joystick

CURSORS Left/right/accelerate/brake

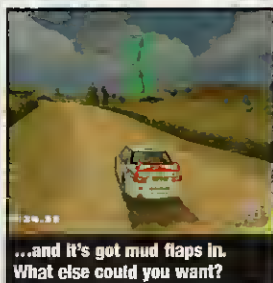
SPACE Handbrake

C Change view

P Pause



It uses an enhanced version of the 70CA engine...



...and it's got mud flaps in. What else could you want?

MEDIEVAL Incredible Simulations

"*Medieval* is a tactical combat game depicting various field battles that took place in the period from about 500AD to 1500AD." That's what it says in the help file – you may want to check that out.

Controls: Mouse



MAX 2 Interplay

In the Nationwide League of real-time strategy games, *MAX 2* tops the table. For those of you sick of the same old build-and-bash tactics, you may want to try something that little bit different.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

ALT-L Load game

ALT-S Save game

ALT-F Display files menu

ALT-X Exit game without saving

F5 Switch to saved view #1

F6 Switch to saved view #2

F7 Switch to saved view #3

F8 Switch to saved view #4

CTRL-F5 Save view #1

CTRL-F6 Save view #2

CTRL-F7 Save view #3

CTRL-F8 Save view #4

CURSORS Scroll map

+/- Zoom in/out

PG UP/PG DN Tilt map up/down

DEL Restore map to top-down view

CTRL-S Toggle survey

CTRL-T Toggle status

CTRL-C Toggle colours

CTRL-H Toggle hits

CTRL-F Toggle fog of war

CTRL-R Toggle range

CTRL-A Toggle scan

CTRL-G Toggle terrain grid

CTRL-N Toggle names

ENTER End the turn (turn-based only)

ESC Exit game if no other modes enabled

SPACE/ALT-P Pause

F10 Exit game

CTRL +/- Zoom selected spycam in/out

ALT +/- Select next/previous spycam

</> Select previous/next unit

CTRL+1-9 Set group number 1-9

1-9 Select group 1-9

A Attack (combat units)

B Autofire – disable (infiltrators & EW pods)

B Build (factories, constructors & engineers)

B Buy upgrade (gold mining station)

C Continue (mobile units)

D Disable (infiltrators and EW pods)

E Enter (mobile units)

F Autofire (combat units)

G Upgrade all (buildings)

H Automove – hold (mobile units)

I Info (all units)

J Automove – repair (mobile repair units)

X Steal (infiltrators and EW pods)

L Autofire all (combat units)

L Load (transports, docks, depots and hangars)

M Automove (mobile units)

N Autofire – none (combat units)

O Automove – retreat (mobile units)

P Path (factories, depots, hangars and docks)

P Place mine (mine layers)

Q Autofire – steal (infiltrators & EW pods)

R Remove mine (mine layers)

R Repair (mobile repair units)

R Research (research centres)

S Start (factories)

S Stop (factories and mobile units)

T Autofire – threats (combat units)

U Upgrade (buildings)

V Automove – advance (combat units)

X Destruct (buildings)

ON THE CD ADDED EXTRAS

There's more to our CD than demos and patches. Here's a glimpse at some of the other added extras on the *ZONE CD*

HOTSHOTS

Check out the latest screenshots and movies for *Half-Life*, *Heretic II* and *Sogor: Mobile Armour Division*.

QUAKE MOVIES

Two cool movies: *Quake Done Quick* and *Scourge Done Slick*. You'll need full versions of *Quake* and *Quake Mission Pack: The Scourge Of Amargon* to appreciate them both. Check out the associated readme files on how to run both movies.

REVIEWS LIST

At last, a comprehensive list of every game ever praised and humiliated within the annals of *PC ZONE*. In alphabetical order you'll find a score for each game and the issue it was reviewed in.

TIPS AND SOLUTIONS

Want to know how to get red wine stains out of the carpet? You need lots of salt.

Want to get through *Spec Ops* or loads of other games? Load this up.

WIREPLAY

Back to the classics for Wireplay. You'll find the latest client software fitted as standard, as well as *MUD 2*, *Bridge*, *Chess* and *Backgammon*. Sorry for those of you waiting for the latest *Quake* mods – there wasn't room. Hopefully next month.

PLUS:

Comuserve 2.6a

If you're still to get online, here's a good place to start after you plug in that new modem. Includes one month's free trial.

3Dfx Glide Drivers v2.43

If you haven't got a 3Dfx card, you'll hardly care about these.

DirectX 6.0 for Windows 95

The latest version of MS's system drivers – better than the last one, apparently.

DirectX 6.0 for Windows 98

And again for you up-to-date Win98 users.

Ezdesk '95 v1.8

Latest version of the superb desktop-saving application.

Winzip v6.3

Essential archiving utility that no one should be without.

Fileview v2.1

Likewise with HEX and ASCII files, if you like that kind of thing.

Ameol v2.12

CIX online conferencing software.

Kali95

Popular internet gaming software.

Timeonline v1.10E

Save money by keeping track of your time online.

Getright v3.1

Cure those downloading headaches.

mIRC v5.4

Latest version of the popular Net Relay Chat software.

ClaraNET

Sign up with ClaraNET and enjoy one of the cheapest services available.

SciTech Display Doctor v6.0

Graphics card playing up? Try a course of this for 30 days.

FLOPPY DISKS

Floppy disks don't hold the same amount of information as CDs. If you've got the floppy disk version of *PC ZONE*, here's what's on offer. Not much, is it? Perhaps it's time you thought about upgrading

BACKGAMMON DELUXE Shareware

The indomitable Arthur Crump brings us his digital interpretation of that most precious of counter-shuffling games, *Backgammon*.

Puzzle Bobble for the stilted generation.

Controls: Mouse

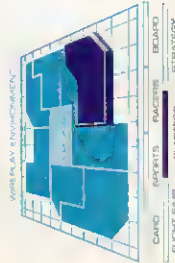
ULTIMATE BID WHIST Shareware

Old people play whist. On Thursday afternoons they congregate, team up and bluff their way into winning a can of beans. It's kind of like the wrinkly version of deathmatch and can be just as bloody. Best get some practise in.

Controls: Mouse

THE BIBLE

DESTINATION: BLASTERS



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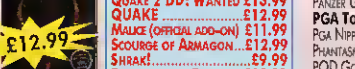
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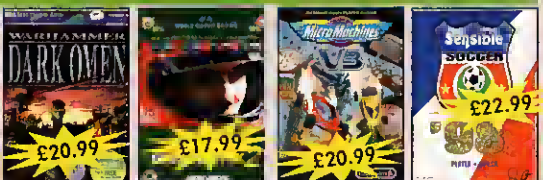
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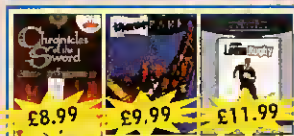
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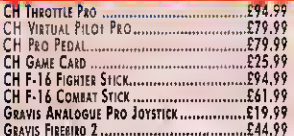
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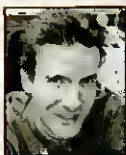
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EXTENDED PLAY



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★ **WOROS** Phil Wand

TRY IT YOURSELF



On this month's cover CD we've got all the official patches, bug fixes, utilities and map editors we could find, including all the ones mentioned in these pages. To track them down, use the CD browser to go to the Patches section. All the patches are listed with a brief description and any relevant documentation. Make sure you read any associated README files for information on how to install individual patches. For further help, turn to our CD pages, starting on page 164.

“While software bolt-ons are a solid bet for extending the life of games, there's nothing quite like a costly piece of hardware to get gamers drooling onto their function keys”

Remember the first time you saw a 3Dfx card fired up and running? All those glassy smooth textures, swirling mists and eerie glowing bits made even the shittiest game fly like a classic. And the Pentium II? Here was a plastic fag packet that sat inside your PC and enabled you to max all the detail settings on every game you'd ever owned; blow the dust off Bullfrog's *Magic Carpet II*, try it out on the latest 450MHz chip, and you'll be hooked all over again.

While software bolt-ons are a solid bet for extending the life of your games, there's nothing quite like a costly piece of hardware to get gamers drooling onto their function keys. I mention the word 'costly' because, when compared to freeware, 3Dfx cards and CPUs are infinitely more expensive (you try working out £0 as a percentage). However, in the proverbial grand scheme of things, they're cut-price bargains.

Take the Epson EMP-7300 Multimedia Projector, which retails at a palpitation-inducing £10,000. A serious piece of kit, Epson's little black wonder projects an RGB image from a computer onto a wall – just dandy for PowerPoint presentations (snore). Now, although you're not supposed to use it to play games, you can – and, well, wow! I got to borrow one the other week and filled an entire wall of my lounge with *Need For Speed II*. Later into the evening, a bunch of giggling idiots drove into town and projected *Sega Rally* onto the side of buildings. The thing's just incredible.

Sadly, the projector had to go back. And while I miss driving a 30-foot wide Toyota Celica across WH Smith, I can console myself with freebie hacks and the fact I'm not £9,991.36 overdrawn.

INTERNET TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

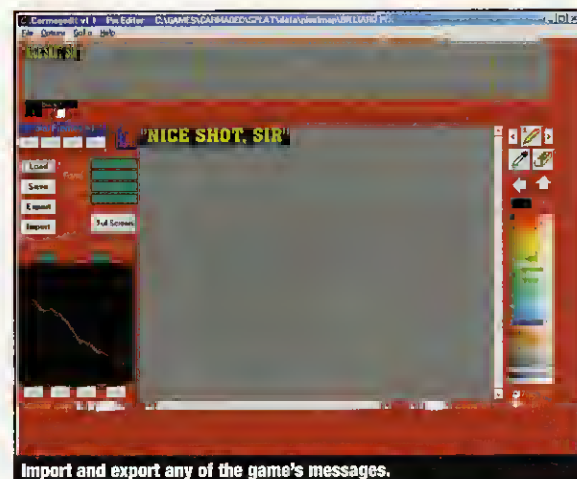
The following sites are all worth a visit if you dig this month's games

CARMAGEDDON COOIES www.carmageddon.com/

CARMAGEOIT www.scofieldsoftware.com/

MECHCOMMANDER www.mechcommander.com/

EPSON PROJECTORS www.epson.co.uk/product/imaging/projector/



Import and export any of the game's messages.

CARMAGEDDON

★ **Maximageddon**
Funageddon



Along with *Grand Theft Auto*, *Carmageddon* has recently been linked

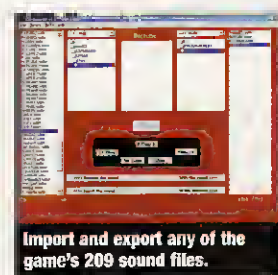
to poor performance at school, brain damage, delinquency, solvent abuse and Crohn's disease. Well, okay, so it hasn't, but that's what the Sunday supplements would like us to believe. Suffice to say that the game has achieved notoriety (makes life a lot easier for the marketing boys) and now needs little or no introduction. Sure, it takes a wee bit of getting used to, and yeah, it's not necessarily to everyone's taste, but it's still a bloody great laugh. There's no strategy to bog you down, no complicated controls to master, no part of the game that makes you think: "Coo, I wish they'd done that better"; it's just pure, unadulterated chaos. Levels become a mad session of splats, screams, yelps and grinding noises as you hoon about the countryside mowing down moo-cows, sliding through piles of festering meat and driving backwards into trees. *But it's not real, okay? Not real!*

★ **CARMAGEDIT** (*cgedv11.zip*) is a neat little freebie that does just what it says on the box – ie arse about with *Carmageddon*. The front end is essentially a wrapper

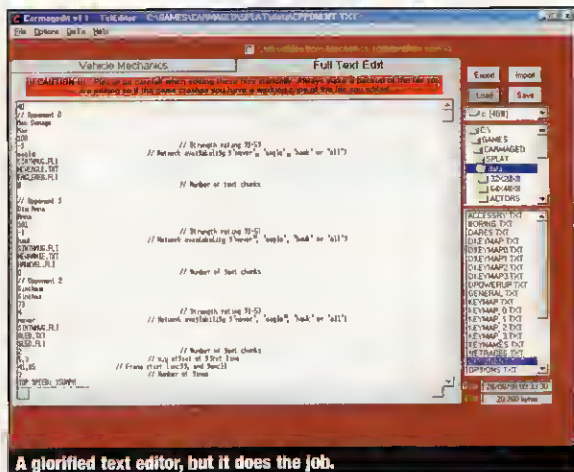
for a picture (*.PIX) editor, a flick (*.FLI) editor, a sound (*.WAV) editor and a text (*.TXT) editor, meaning it's without doubt the most comprehensive utility out there. Once you've finished mucking about with the game's static graphics, you can move on to change the sound, import new animation sequences and even modify the cars.

The program comes complete with its own installer, uninstaller and help system, so if you're worried about stuffing weird shit programs onto your hard drive and not being able to get them off again, don't panic – this one can be set to self-destruct. To install, just extract the contents of the ZIP archive to a temporary directory and then double-click on the setup.exe file to get things going. Follow the prompts, and load the program up at the end.

When you first run it, you might be discouraged by the initial screen which complains about missing initialisation files and damaged software. Keep



Import and export any of the game's 209 sound files.



A glorified text editor, but it does the job.

calm. *Carmageddit* just needs to set up some variables, and will also need to be shown the location of your *Carmageddon* directory. Once you've done that, you should see the main window appear and maximise to fill your screen. If the interface looks a bit on the naff side, try increasing your colour depth (right-click on the Windows desktop, select Properties from the pop-up menu and then select the Settings tab) and see what happens – 16-bit or

sequences of images, for example the rotating preview of the Grimm Brothers' Stiff Shifter, that have been created using Autodesk's *3D Studio*. This is an industry standard animation package with a price tag that you'd expect to see swinging from a Ducati, so unless you can find a third-party tool that will export the flick format, don't bother. Instead, use the import and export options as per the PIX files: you can save a whole sequence of BMP files, edit

“Carmageddon has been linked to poor performance at school, brain damage, delinquency and solvent abuse”

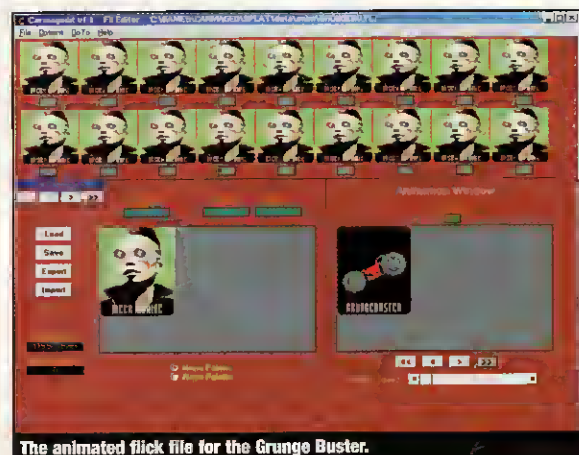
higher should tidy things up.

PIX files form the basic building blocks for images in *Carmageddon*: internal fonts, pop-up messages, cars, pedestrians and so on. Using *Carmageddit*, you can import and export these files – use the Load button to view a standard PIX file, and the Export and Import buttons to save and load Windows bitmap (*.BMP) files respectively. Just remember to make sure the dimensions of the two files are identical before you go making any permanent changes.

Next we'll move on to the game's FLI files. These are

them in something like *Paint Shop Pro*, and then load them back up again.

The WAV section of *Carmageddit* helps you organise all the different sound files that are so fundamental to the atmosphere of the main game. You can take an existing WAV file and insert it by hitting the 'Replace this Sound' button at the bottom of the screen. If you're making new files from scratch, make them 16KHz, 8-bit and mono, and keep them below 50Kb (uncompressed) in size, otherwise the playback may sound distorted.



The animated flick file for the Grunge Buster.

Lastly, the *Carmageddit* TXT editor enables you to hack around with the game's text files. These control various aspects of the game, from how long power-ups last to the way the cars handle. We found that the Vehicle Mechanics text editor wouldn't work properly with the *Splat Pack* car files, but that could be just us being a bit spazzy.

✚ TXT FILE CONVERTOR

(*carm_cv.zip* and *carm_cv2.zip*) does the same job as *Carmageddit*'s TXT editor, enabling you to import and export *Carmageddon*'s encrypted text files. This gives you access to the physics settings for the cars, how the pedestrians behave, power-up definitions and other such stuff. *carm_cv.zip* works on the demo, *carm_cv2.zip* works with the full game.

✚ PEDESTRIAN EDITOR

(*pededit03.zip*) is a OOS-based tool that enables you to view, import and export the numerous *Carmageddon* pedestrians. Use the cursor keys to move up and down the list of people, and hit 'E' to export the selected image (to export all frames, hit CTRL + E). To import a GIF image to the frame, hit 'I'.

✚ PIX EDITOR

(*pixedit_b3.zip*) provides the same functionality as *Carmageddit*'s PIX editor, and will enable you to view, import and export the game's various PIX files.

✚ WINMAT

(*winmat.zip*) gives you access to *Carmageddon*'s MAT data. These files store information about game objects, and include a reference to the appropriate PIX and Shade files. Recommended for experienced hackers only.

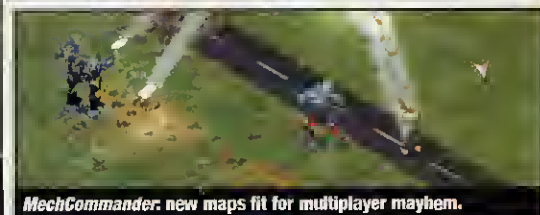
✚ **CARMAGEDDON CARS** More than 50 new cars are available from the *carmageddon.com* website, including the *Hong Kong Phooey* mobile, Herbie and the General Lee from *The Dukes Of Hazard*. All cars come with accompanying PIX files, which you can view with either the PIX Editor or *Carmageddit*.

✚ CARMAGEDDON PEDESTRIANS

Close to 20 new pedestrians can be downloaded for free, including a bikini girl (sans bikini) and the Spice Girls. So if you've ever wanted to run the SGs down and reverse back and forth over their intestines, get yourself along to this website.

✚ MISCELLANEDUS STUFF

Includes a Windows desktop theme, new sirens and sounds for your cars, save games, and a Word document that outlines all the *Carmageddon* maps. www.carmageddon.com



MechCommander: new maps fit for multiplayer mayhem.

MECHCOMMANDER

✚ New multiplayer maps for Activision's BattleTech blast

Some like it, some don't. Either way, *MechCommander* is a noteworthy diversion from mainstream real-time strategy. Resource control is limited and base building non-existent, but that's not the focus of the game; essentially, you enter each new mission with what survived the last, and are left to get on with it. The maps below should see you through the next few months, as they're all fit for multiplayer mayhem and are strong on team play. We didn't quite have time to squeeze them all on to the *ZONE* cover disc, so you'll have to fire up your dial-up and visit the MicroProse FTP site. Instead if you want to grab them. They all come wrapped up in one 2.5Mb self-extracting file which can be downloaded direct from ftp.microprose.com/pub/mps-online/new-versions/mpaddon.exe.

ARENA is yer common or garden, just how we like it, no-holds-barred fight to the death.

BLOOD MAKES THE GRASS GROW is a varied terrain map that's been littered with walls, turrets, woods and forests, gas tanks and crates to ensure a multiplayer deathfest.

BREACH THE LINE has teams stuck on an island and with a mission to capture the HQ building and destroy all the complexes on the base. Keep an eye out for mines and turrets.

CAPTURE BASE takes place in a rocky desert. Each team must try to invade the other's headquarters while protecting their own base.

DEMO MAP outlines the two missions from the

MechCommander demo.

FORTRESS ASSAULT sees both sides trying to capture and hold the same base at the same time, with half the turrets firing on one side and half the turrets firing on the other.

GUNBUNK involves one bunch of 'Mechs defending the bunkers and guns, while the other lot have to destroy them.

INDUSTRIAL STRIKE is an urban map in both 'normal' and 'no artillery' flavours. Team two have to destroy eight of the nine complexes along the north end of the map; team one must defend with the aid of turrets, 'Mechs and natural defences.

KING OF THE HILL The objective of this mission is to capture the HQ at the top of the central hill and hold it until all the enemy is destroyed or the mission clock expires.

MANY BASES is a weird layout of six bases. To win, you have to storm, capture and maintain control of five HQ buildings.

POWER SURGE has three different groups of two generators. Team one's objective is to protect at least four of them; team two's objective is to destroy all six.



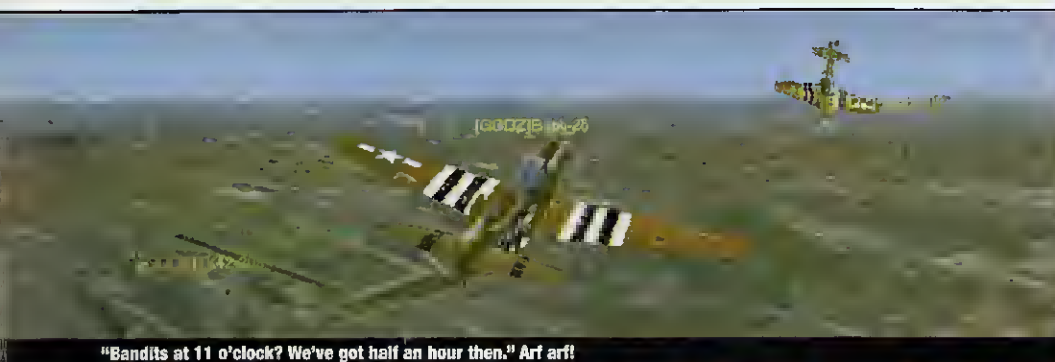
Wireplay

The games network from BT

NEWSWIRE

The month's hottest news on Wireplay, the UK's number one online gaming network

★ WIRED Warren Christmas



"Bandits at 11 o'clock? We've got half an hour then." Arrrr!



"My height and position? I'm six foot and at the controls."

IN THE CLUB: AIR ATTACK

In our irregular looks at the game clubs organised on Wireplay, this month we turn the spotlight on Wireplay's popular, fabby and totally free multiplayer flight simulator

CLUB CAPTAIN: Garion (real name unknown)

CONTACT: garion@westernisles.demon.co.uk

CLUB WEBSITE:

www.westernisles.demon.co.uk/AirAttack

CLUB HISTORY: Garion was among those involved in beta-testing *Air Attack* on Wireplay. He liked it so much that he set up a simple website with hints and tips, a noticeboard and so on. It grew and grew and is now a full-scale club site.

TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE: Once a month

Garion runs a Mass Free-For-All (FFA), where club members can just turn up and play. It's a sudden-death game, with each player having one life. The last man (or woman) flying gets the glory. Also held once a month (a fortnight apart from the Mass FFA), is the Endurance FFA. Favoured more by the seasoned hands, this event is split into 30-minute rounds, where those with the best kill ratio progress to the final. Just starting is a league where two or four squadrons battle for dominance in an arena; the Air Attack Club has 17 officially recognised squadrons to date.

GAME TIMES: Mass FFAs are run on Sunday nights starting at 8pm. Endurance FFAs vary, but rounds are usually played on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, with the Grand Final taking place on a Sunday.

CLUB RULES: You must be a registered member of the club to take part in any of the Air Attack Club competitions. No swearing or abuse is allowed. "Other than that, we're pretty easy going," says Garion. "Anybody who gets up people's noses will soon find out how difficult the game is when everybody shoots you on sight."

Best *Air Attack* players on Wireplay include: TK421, Baby's Arm, Flares, Hotpants, Bloody Nutter, Mebe and no doubt Garion himself.

GARION'S TOP TENT TIPS:

- 1 Look at the Newbie's Guide and Help files on the Club website. The best AA players use a wide range of game features.
- 2 Get a good joystick. You can play AA using the keyboard, but to really master it you need a joystick with a twist throttle, POV hat and a built-in throttle control (Garion recommends Microsoft's SideWinder 3D Precision Pro).

3 Learn to use the different views, especially the padlock one (F4) - once you've got the hang of it, it's virtually impossible for an opponent to get away from you.

4 For fast braking (in Simple Physics mode), judicious use of air brakes (B), landing gear (G) and flaps (D/F) can prove useful when an opponent is hard on your tail.

5 Flaps can be quite handy for decreasing your turning circle - it's worth experimenting with. (Apparently this is Garion's best top-secret tip!)

6 Master landing and taking off. Learn how to do it quickly. You're very vulnerable on a runway, and even more so at take-off and approach.

7 Don't start playing fast and loose with your guns around runways. You can get the odd kill that way, but on the whole you'll just crash and burn - strictly for suckers.

8 Avoid crashing at all costs - it really dents your kill ratio, and thus slows down your promotion. Make an effort to progress to Captain status, as a better selection of planes then becomes available to you.

9 Learn the different characteristics of the aircraft - they're all quite different, even in Simple Physics mode. The 109 is lightning-fast and heavily armed - great for hit-and-runs, for example; the Yak is slow but can turn on a tuppence; the P38 flies like a tank and is only good for making a nice big target.

10 If you are in a Squadron, *practice*. It makes a world of difference, as the current quality AA Squadrons, such as GODZ and DEVILZ, demonstrate. You can start a private team arena to practice in without disturbance from others.

★ You can download *Air Attack* free from

www.wireplay.co.uk/downloads/free/airattack.htm

WIREPLAY: TAKE US ON

QUAKE II

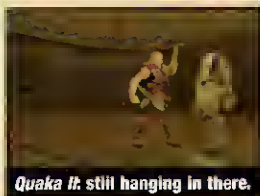
WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER

Take on various members of the PC ZONE gun-toting collective at *Quake II*, Wireplay's most popular game

INFO: This is a free-for-all event - just log in at any time between 6pm and 8pm on the night. At the time of writing we're not sure which server we'll be playing on, but look around and you'll find us. If you do take us on, please email Richie at richie.pcz@dial.pipex.com afterwards with the subject line 'What's your excuse this time?' to tell us what you thought of our performances (remember to include your Wireplay handle and your real name). Oh, and watch out for a special report in a forthcoming issue.

PRIZES: The best performer on the night will be crowned our Player of the Month and sent £60 of HMV vouchers courtesy of Wireplay.



WIREPLAY
CHARTS

Quake II: still hanging in there.

LATE AUGUST 1998

Quake and its sequel remain as popular as ever, but *Air Attack* is still ahead of *Unreal* on the Game Worlds Channel. *MUD II* holds off *Duke* on Rapid Play, while *Poker* has come from nowhere to take the number two spot on the Mind Games Channel.

GAME WORLDS CHANNEL

- 1 Quake II
- 2 Quake
- 3 Air Attack
- 4 Unreal
- 5 MUD II

RAPID PLAY CHANNEL

- 1 MUD II
- 2 Duke Nukem 3D
- 3 Age Of Empires
- 4 Red Alert
- 5 Total Annihilation

MIND GAMES CHANNEL

- 1 Bridge
- 2 Poker
- 3 Chess
- 4 Cribbage
- 5 Draughts

WHAT IS
WIREPLAY?IT'S A GAMES
NETWORK

Wireplay is a games network from BT which enables you to meet and compete with other gamers from all over the UK. All the software you need to get going is available free by calling freephone 0800 800918 (give 'em your details and you'll be sent a free CD) or from www.wireplay.com/uk/downloads.

2 WAYS 2 PAY

There are two ways of paying for your time. The Pay As You Play option costs 2.5p a minute off-peak and 6p a minute during peak hours. Frequent players can use the Subscription service, which costs £9.95 a month or £99.50 a year, with all calls then charged at local rates at all times.

ZONE ON WIREPLAY
ACTION QUAKE II, AUGUST 24

"So, BA, I hear you don't like flying."

What's this? Another deathmatch modification for Quake II? But is it any good? Richie Shoemaker pops on to Wireplay for an impromptu sesh to find out

Imagine a game where you turn a corner and there, next to a bleeding corpse, is a pistol. You've already got one, but you realise that if you have another one you can make more holes. There's also a sniper rifle with a 2-6x 'scope, but you leave that in favour of the sawn-off shotgun slung across your back – it's slow to reload but it makes a real big mess. As well as the pistol, you take the dead man's slippers, so no one can hear you coming. The next guy you come across is very much alive, crouched in a corner, applying bandages to a leg wound. The last thing he saw was his intestines fly into his face...

Sounds alright, doesn't it? Well, that's *Action Quake II*, the latest deathmatch mod doing the rounds and working very nicely thank you on Wireplay, even in its current beta form.

"It's a lot less mindless than normal deathmatch," says Jesus Smith (which is apparently his real name), aka Skin&Bonze of the Pie Boy Clan. "I think it's great, but some people find that there's just a bit too much to do. It can be just as hectic as a busy deathmatch, but it has a far superior feeling of involvement, a sense of being there, which is helped by the real-world weaponry."

What adds to the realism is the reloading factor, and the fact that a shot to the head, even with a pistol, is likely to get you a kill. You'll even limp if you get shot in the leg. And don't expect to find any

health packs either; unless you apply some bandages you'll bleed to death.

So how smart is it? Well, the biggest problem is binding the five extra keys. Once that's done it's a case of carrying on as usual. You spend more time aiming up your shots and crouching behind walls, but this adds far more tension than just racking up kills in a regular *Quake* deathmatch. Put it this way: if the developers could put together a few single-player levels and tidy up the graphics, they could certainly make some money out of it.

I took a deep breath and gave *Action Quake II* my best shot. "You played well in the second game," said The Son of God. "I will temporarily assume it was skill, until proven otherwise." (Fair enough.) "It's good to see journos get down and dirty with the rest of us plebs."

It's a shame that these 'plebs' don't appreciate the difficulties of trying to win while taking some half-decent screenshots at the same time (*How many times are we gonna get away with this excuse? – Ed.*)

Jesus has the last word: "*Action Quake II* it's for those with a disposition morally unsound enough to want to John Woo the opposition with twin .45s."

And so endeth the lesson.

★ The *Action Quake II* modification (7Mb) and maps (2.2Mb) are available for download from Wireplay's website at www.wireplay.co.uk/downloads/quake/quake2_w.htm. You will of course need a full copy of *Quake II* to play it. Wireplay is currently running an *Action Quake* server during weekdays only.

FROM THE WIRES

★ It's too late to enter now, but you may still have a chance to go and watch the grand final of Quakeadelica, Wireplay's *QUAKE II* tournament, co-sponsored by AMD and Diamond Multimedia. Hosted by Dani Behr, along with former *Gamesmaster* co-presenter and friend of PC ZONE Rik Henderson, the finals will take place at the Ministry of Sound nightclub in south London on Thursday 15 October in front of up to 700 people. Entrance is free. For full details take a look at www.quakeadelica.com. PC ZONE will be there, of course, and we'll be bringing you a full report in issue #71, on sale Tuesday 17 November.

★ Wireplay have added a server supporting yet another cool *QUAKE II* modification. Weapons Factory features nine player classes (each with different weapons and capabilities), new arms such as a cluster rocket and plague grenade, and persistent team defence technologies which include sentry guns, decoys, laser defences and alarms. The Weapons Factory mod (8.5Mb) can be downloaded from www.wireplay.co.uk/downloads/quake/quake2_w.htm.

★ Ian Craddock (better known on Wireplay as Stormkeep) is organising a *QUAKE* Rocket Arena cup and is looking for players who reckon they're a bit tasty with a rocket launcher. Take a look at www.netcomuk.co.uk/~ldat/racup/home.html for more details.

★ Broom's *JEDI KNIGHT* club website, as featured in our July issue (PCZ #66), has had a design overhaul thanks to Brother Matt. Check it out at www.s-clark.demon.co.uk/index.html.

★ Congratulations to Sug, who took the trophy at Wireplay's first POKER tournament in August (*Got any tips you'd like to pass on? – Ed.*) Full details on the tournament (in which 30 players competed), forthcoming events and the Wireplay Poker club are on Sielly's website at www.btinternet.com/~simon.price/. We'll be giving this Poker lark a go ourselves in the coming weeks.

WIREPLAY GAMES

No new games on Wireplay this month, although our sources tell us that a number of announcements regarding game support are about to be made – keep an eye on www.wireplay.com for details. In the meantime, if there's a particular title you'd like to see on Wireplay, email wirenews@wireplay.com. Here's a list of just some of the games already supported on the service...

- ★ Actua Golf 2
- ★ Actua Soccer 2
- ★ Air Attack
- ★ Age Of Empires (inc trial version)
- ★ Armored Fist 2
- ★ Backgammon
- ★ Big Red Racing (inc Wireplay Edition)
- ★ Blood (inc shareware v1.1)
- ★ Command & Conquer
- ★ Comanche 3
- ★ Dark Omen
- ★ Daytona Deluxe (inc demo)
- ★ Descent/Descent 2 (inc demo)
- ★ Doom (v1.9)/Doom II/Ultimate Doom
- ★ Doom Shareware (v1.666)
- ★ Duke Nukem 3D
- ★ EF2000: Wireplay Edition
- ★ Extreme Assault
- ★ F-22 ADF
- ★ F/A-1B Korea
- ★ Final Liberation
- ★ Formula Karts
- ★ Forsaken (inc demo)
- ★ Fragile Allegiance
- ★ G-Nome
- ★ Incubation
- ★ Jedi Knight (inc MOTS)
- ★ Microsoft Flight Sim '98
- ★ Monster Truck Madness 2
- ★ MS Cart Precision Racing (inc demo)
- ★ MUD II
- ★ NASCAR 2
- ★ NetMech
- ★ Outwars
- ★ Plane Crazy
- ★ Quake/Quake II
- ★ Red Alert
- ★ (inc Counterstrike/Aftermath)
- ★ Redneck Rampage
- ★ Shadow Warrior (inc shareware)
- ★ Sid Meier's Gettysburg
- ★ Star Wars Supremacy
- ★ Terminal Velocity
- ★ Total Annihilation
- ★ Unreal
- ★ Uprising
- ★ Various card and board games
- ★ Virtua Fighter 2 (inc demo)
- ★ Virtual Pool/Virtual Pool 2
- ★ Virtual Snooker
- ★ Warcraft 2 (inc demo)



Wireplay
The games network from BT

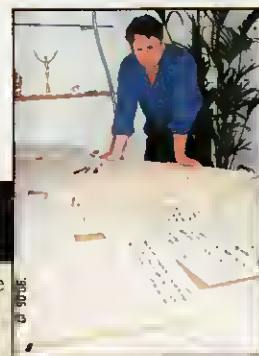
THE LIONHEAD DIARIES



Continuing our insider's view of the making of *Black And White*, the first game from new developers Lionhead

✱ WORDS Steve Jackson

➤ Mark Webley surveys the wealth of ideas generated during his week-long brainstorming session with the rest of the Lionhead team.



BRAINSTORMING

It was to be a memorable brainstorming night. The venue was Peter's house, where the whole company congregated one Shrove Tuesday evening. On arrival we discovered Peter had just had remote control gates fitted in his driveway. In spite of his image as a techno-guru, Peter is hopeless with gadgets. He hadn't a clue how his new gates worked. So as he poked about frantically on the remote control buttons indoors, we patiently watched the gates open and close at random from the street. It wasn't until our sound man Russell Shaw arrived in his car that we learned the gates' great secret: if you drove a car up close they would, obligingly, open up for you. A fine security feature, don't you agree?

The evening kicked off with beers and a few hands of Lionhead's favourite card game, Und Tschuss. Later on, as you'd expect, an excess of alcohol would inhibit any meaningful contributions. So someone wisely suggested we move on to the brainstorming session while we were all still sober. The discussion which followed was... Well, judge for yourself.

"Right," said Peter, "let's start at the beginning. What do we want the aim of the game to be?"

"You know," mused artist Mark Healey, "like, when you see a film and you think it's really good because it touches parts of your personal life? That's how we want people to talk about *Black And White*. To enlighten. That's the name of the game." (If this is difficult to follow, bear in mind that Mark is our 'hippy' artist.)

Peter nodded. "And what do we want to see on-screen?"

"Hey!" Russell had a flash of inspiration. "What about this - we can relate the way you play the game to how it looks! If you choose to play evil, your territory loses colour - it goes black-and-white. If you play as a good wizard, your world becomes vibrant and colourful. And if you play really badly, your colours start to get really wishy-washy."

"Nice idea!" beamed Peter. "I like it."

"Yeah!" agreed programmer Jonty Barnes. "Er, can we talk about the magic spells for a minute?"

"Okay," said Peter, "But first, are we bold enough? Do we dare to do it?"

"What?"

"Go inside the creature. Go first-person."

"Oh, wow!" Mark Healey leapt to his feet. "It'll be, like, a game of self-realisation. You create - you nurture - your child the way you want to bring it up. Then you become your own offspring. I like it. It'll be f**king amazing!"

There were exuberant nods all round. The excitement reached fever pitch. Jonty was the first to start blowing across the neck of his beer bottle, making a hooting sound. Mark Webley joined in. Paul and Jamie joined in too - and

to the delight of everyone else, their bottles were in perfect harmony. Soon everyone was honking and tooting on beer bottles. A rhythm was emerging, with everyone fitting in to the beat.

"We've got to get the bottle orchestra on tape!" yelled Jonty.

Peter leapt to his feet and rushed about trying to find a recording device. The man with everything could find nothing to record with. A friend of Peter's who happened to be there at the time brought in his laptop so we could use the Sound Recorder in Windows (we were that desperate). Meanwhile, Peter discovered to his amazement that the MiniDisc player he'd bought last week also recorded! Unfortunately he couldn't find any disks.

Finally someone found a minidisc jammed down the back of the sofa and Peter set the machine recording. But by now the bottle orchestra was out of breath, with several players complaining of 'spinning out'.

"Phew! That was cool!" sighed Jonty. "But now can we talk about the magic spells?"

"Okay," agreed Peter. "Let's talk magic."

Some great suggestions emerged. The most innovative was a contribution from Russell who suggested spells could be cast by tracing out a symbol on-screen with the mouse. So you'd pick up a fire spell, draw your mouse round in a circle, and a ring of fire would appear. To create a wind spell you'd swirl your mouse round and round as if stirring up a vortex.

Mark Healey also had ideas for the mouse pointer, which he wanted to take the form of a magician's hand. Programmed and drawn with real physics, the fingers would sway and droop in a realistic way as the hand floated across the screen.

At this point Mark Webley started hooting on his beer bottle. Moments later, the entire bottle orchestra had started up again. This time the whole performance was recorded on MiniDisc. Jamie insisted we should put the recording on our website. I shuddered. Who on earth would be interested in listening to a bunch of drunks tooting on Rolling Rock bottles for ten minutes? Thankfully, the idea was soon forgotten.

The party fizzled out at 4.30am. Nobody made it into work the next morning. But at least we had a couple of excellent new ideas which would go into *Black And White*. **PCZ**

✱ As well as being a director for start-up games developer Lionhead, Steve Jackson is co-founder of Games Workshop, author of Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks, and columnist for The Daily Telegraph.

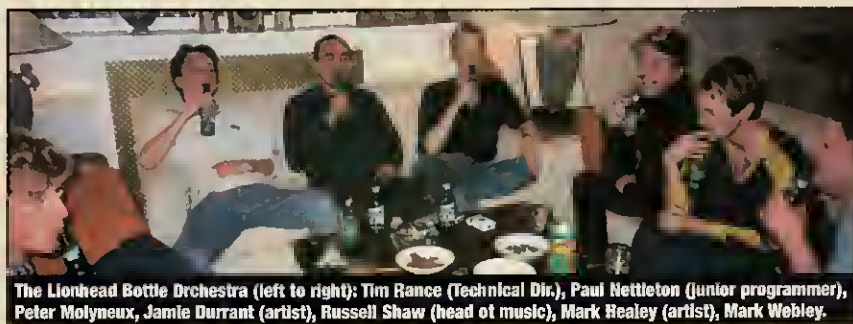
✱ The next part follows in next month's issue, out Wednesday 21 October



A Tibetan landscape that will feature in *Black And White*.



The Citadel: a place to chill out after a day's game developing.



The Lionhead Bottle Orchestra (left to right): Tim Rance (Technical Dir.), Paul Hettleton (junior programmer), Peter Molyneux, Jamie Durrant (artist), Russell Shaw (head of music), Mark Healey (artist), Mark Webley.



You know you want it.



Out now

SICKNOTES



You want fame? Well fame costs. And right here's where you start paying. In sarcasm. Welcome to Sick Notes, the single worst letters page in the world. Don't believe us? Read on, sir, read on

★ ANSWERED BY Charlie Brooker

CONTACT INFO

Sick Notes wants your letters – but more than that, we want your game ideas. Yes, that's right: we want you to design a game, and send it to us. And we want more pictures. And more comments about Leeds. And some warm sweaters.

WRITE TO Sick Notes, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk
With the subject heading 'Sick Notes'

CAVALCADE OF IMBECILES

okay GAY BOY..you want a game idea you got one. Hows this: Have a game in which Mr Brooker (gay boy) is showing his (hairy ass)...(by the way i am not gay) and some one comes with a WHIPPING stick and Whips !! Mr brooker's ass with it soo hard that Mr brooker begs for mercy but no one listens to him and the player just whips him to death (hahaha) and then the next mission would be where Mr brooker would be running around and you would have to shoot his head with a rocket launcher as

many times as possible or stab him in the back as many times as possible (cool or what) under 5 minutes. Also there'll be missions like where Mr. Brooker gets married but due to not enough satisfaction from him, his wife leaves him and Mr.brooker decides to join the gay club where every gay beats the shit out of him (If you're thinking why Mr.Brooker gets beats well then thats because he is an insult to the gay commuinity therefore they rather wouldn't have him), YOU would also get a chance to swear at him as well as dress him up as a jack ass and kick his ass.

Thats all for now

Periro16@aol.com

Booker, your shit and your ugly and your reviews are so shit i rip them out, shred them and then burn them. The letter in issue 65 was smack bang on target. I bet when you get home you molest a picture of Pamela Anderson and think it is funny. How your colleagues put up with you is anyone's guess but the poor people probably need pysicatry after work! Such an elightened magazine is sorely let down by the mass of suger and shit that is you!!! So f*** off you piece of primordial shit that has dragged itself into Pczone and is spreding excrement all over your desk!!! Go to hell!!!!

Mike Mitchell

★ Ah, bless. These two are trying to get our attention. And given their acute inability to communicate coherently, it's clearly been a mammoth struggle. Imagine the Herculean effort required in frowning their caveman brows, hunched over the keyboard, typing letter by letter with a

single finger – a picture of Cro-Magnon concentration. Peppered with endearing spelling mistakes, almost crippled by clumsy grammar... theirs is a truly unique language.

Against the odds, they finished their letters then somehow fathomed out how to email them to us too. Remarkable.

This is their moment. This is their triumph. This is their hour in the spotlight; a touching, elegant ballet before the eyes of a nation. A time to be savoured, for all such things come to an end. Their fragile beauty is doomed to wilt. A lifetime of dutiful service in the stockroom of an out of town B&Q superstore beckons. The dancers leave the stage. Somewhere in the audience, an elderly man wipes a tear from his eye, rises to his feet and starts a slow hand clap...

GAME FOR A LAUGH

How about this for a new game: It is set in the PC ZONE offices, it uses the Unreal engine, and you get to run around and shoot Charlie Brooker with an assault rifle. Or how about launching a couple of hundred rockets at Richie? Way cool. You could offer it as a prize when people subscribe to your magazine. Cool.

David Patterson,
Welling, Kent

★ Hilarious! Thanks for taking the time to send that in, David. We glanced at it momentarily and then passed on to something else. Well done!

THIRD TIME LUCKY

I am writing to you to agree with a letter sent to you in issue 67 concerning bad

language. I bought your magazine for your Klingon and Tomb Raider reviews, but every third word was an obscenity.

Gary Phillips

★ Every third word an obscenity? You counted them, didn't you? You sat there and counted them out, one by one, moving your lips and using your fingers as you did so. Well here's another one for your collection: you're a c***.

FOR GOD AND ST GEORGE

I read with growing anger the letter you published from Mr Sigrun Helgason. I mean, he's not even English. Why doesn't the foreign bastard go back to Iceland or whatever Godforsaken shit hole he comes from?

Anon

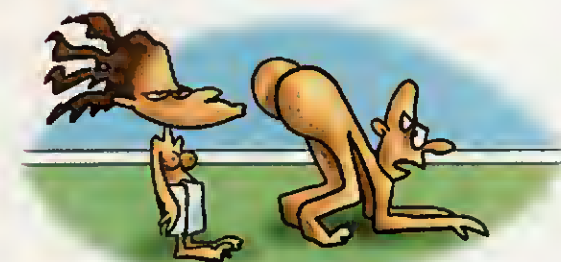
★ Editing this page is a bit like being trapped in a plummeting elevator with a gang of flailing, vomiting farmhands.

HE'S GOT A POINT, YOU KNOW

Hi there, you lonely sad person. I am writing this letter to comment about how pathetic and sad you are. All you do all day is sit in front of a computer screen gazing in visual delight, not caring about the real world around you. You lot have probably never seen the light of day. You probably have no friends and your families have probably disowned you. Please guys, try and have a life.

Aaron Tugwell

★ That's an interesting surname, Aaron. Ancestors used to work down the docks, helping out the sailors in exchange for small coins, did they?



"Isn't it time we bought a proper hairdryer"



"Yes!"

CB

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